

Marshals
Gospel Mystery
OF
SANCTIFICATION

Open'd in Sundry

PRACTICAL DIRECTIONS.

Suited especially to the Case of those
who labour under the Guilt and
Power of *In-dwelling Sin*.

To which is added,

A SERMON on JUSTIFICATION.

1 Cor. i. 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.

*God hath chosen the foolish things of the World, to
confound the wise ; and God hath chosen the
weak things of the World, to confound the
things which are mighty, &c.*

By Mr. *WALTER MARSHAL*, late
Preacher of the Gospel.

The Third Edition Corrected.

EDINBURGH.

Printed for DAVID DUNCAN, and sold at his
House near the Foot of the West Bow, and by
several Book sellers in Town. 1733.

Price 2. sh.

George Berkeley

Book Aug. 3. 1763



THE
P R E F A C E.

READER,

MR. *Walter Marshal*, Composer of these Directions, *how to attain to that practice and manner of life which we call holiness, righteousness, or godliness*, was educated in *New College in Oxford*, and was a fellow of the said college, and afterwards he was chosen a fellow of the college at *Winchester*: But was put under the *Bartholomew bushel*, with near two thousand more lights, (*a sin not yet repented of*) whose illuminations made the land a *Goshen*. He was esteemed a *Presbyterian*, and was called to be pastor to a people at *Gosport in Hampshire*, where he shined, tho' he had not the publick oil. The substance of these meditations was there spun out of his own *experiences*; he having been much exercised with troubled thoughts, and that for many years, and had, by many mortifying

tifying methods, sought peace of conscience; but notwithstanding all, his troubles still increased. Whereupon he consulted others, particularly Mr. *Baxter*, whose writings he had been much conversant with, who thereupon told Mr. *Marshall* he took them too legally. He afterwards consulted an eminent divine, Dr. *T. G.* giving him an account of the state of his soul, and particularizing his sins, which lay heavy on his conscience; who in his reply told him, he had forgot to mention the *greatest sin of all*, the sin of *unbelief*, in not believing on the Lord Jesus for the remission of his sins, and sanctifying his nature. Hereupon he set himself to the *studying and preaching* Christ and attained to *eminent holiness, great peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost*. Mr. *Marshall's* dying Words were these, *The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life thro' Jesus Christ our Lord*; having but just before said to those about him, that he now dyed *in the full perswasion of the truth, and in the comfort of that doctrine which he had preached*: The sum whereof is contained in the ensuing discourse.

Some time since, he was translated by death, *Elijah-like* dropping these Sheets a

hi

The Preface.

v

his *mantle*, for succeeding *Elisbas* to go forth with, for the *conversion* of sinners, and *comfort* of drooping souls.

These papers are the profound *experiences* of a studious holy soul, *learned* of the *Father*, coming from his very heart; and smell of no party or design but for *holiness* and *happiness*. Yet it is to be feared they will scarcely go down with the heady Notionalists of this age, who are of the tribe of *Reuben*, wavering with every wind of modish doctrine: But in *Judah* they will be praised, and we hope that many shrubs and cedars may thereby advance in *knowledge* and *comfort*. But not to detain you longer; Read over *All* these directions, that you may fully understand the author, or read *none*. If you do it with the *serious* humble spirit in which they were wrote, it may be hop'd (the matter being so weighty, and from so able an hand) thro' the grace of God they will sink into thy conscience, and make thee a *solid* christian, full of *faith*, *holiness* and *consolation*.

21 July, 1692.

N. N.

T H E

THE Author of these Directions was well known to me, and was with me in my house a month together, above twenty years past; and I esteem him a person deserving the character which this preface giveth him.

T. Woodcock.

21 July 1692.

Some SCRIPTURES Explained in this Book.

Gen. ii. 17.	- Page 159, 231	8.	86
Job. i. 5.	29	23	355
Eccl. vii. 16.	286	13. 14.	88
— 29	92	1 Cor. xi. 29.	311
Isa. xxxviii. 3.	318	2 Cor. xiii. 12.	94
— 50. 10.	207, 241	— xiii. 5.	92
Jer. xxxi. 29, 30.	93	Eph. i. 3.	50
Hos. xi. 4.	36	— 10.	61
Mat. v. 12.	117	— 13.	195
— vi. 12, 15.	143	— ii. 5, 6.	56
— xi. 14. - 17.	286, 329	— 20, 21.	61
— xxii. 81, 12.	135	— iv. 22, 24.	88
Mar. i. 15.	140	— iv. 18.	315
Luke xiii. 24.	221	1 Tim. i. 8.	272
— xiv. 21, 23.	140	— ii. 8.	319
John i. 16, 17.	51	Heb. x. 10, 14, 18.	30
Acts xiii. 53.	352	— 22.	28, 186
Rom. i. 5.	115	— xii. 17.	228
— ii. 6, 7.	114	Jam. ii.	379
— iii. 25.	373	— 24.	116
— iv. 5.	114, 161	1 John i. 3.	43, 51
— vii. 1.	123	— iii. 9.	257
— 6.	253	Rev. xxii. 12, 14.	116
— viii 3, 4.	55		

THE

THE CONTENTS.

Direction I. *To perform duties required in the Law, first, learn the effectual means to attain so great an end.* Page 1.

Direction II. *Four endowments and qualifications necessary ; (1.) An inclination and propensity of heart thereunto. (2.) A perswasion of our reconciliation with God. (3.) A perswasion of our enjoyment of everlasting Happiness. (4.) A perswasion of sufficient strength both to will and perform duties acceptably.* 15

Direction III. *The way to get these endowments to enable for practice, is to receive them from CHRIST's fulness, by union and fellowship with him.* 42

Direction IV. *The means or instruments of this union and all fellowship are the gospel and faith. What faith is.* 61

Direction V. *We cannot attain holiness by our endeavours in a natural state, without union and fellowship with CHRIST.* 81

Direction VI. *These that endeavour sincere obedience as the condition to procure a right and title to salvation, and as a ground to trust on Christ, do seek salvation by the works of the law.* 99

Direction VII. *We are not to imagine, that our hearts and lives must be changed from sin to holiness in any measure, before we may trust on Christ.* 134

Dire.

Direction VIII. *Seek for holiness only in its due order, after union, justification, and the gift of the Holy Ghost; and by faith.* 150.

Direction IX. *We must first receive the comforts of the gospel, that we may perform the duties of the law.* 158

Direction X. *That we may by gospel comforts perform duties of the law, we must get assurance in that very faith whereby we receive Christ.* 171

Direction XI. *Believe on Christ in a right manner without delay, and then continue and increase in faith; That so enjoyment of Christ, and union and fellowship with him, and all holiness by him may be begun, continued, and increased.* 208

Direction XII. *Diligently use faith for performance of the duties of the law, by walking no longer according to your old state, principles, or means of practice; but only according to that new state you receive, by faith, and its principles, and means of practice.* 247

Direction XIII. *Make a right use of all means appointed in the word, for obtaining and practising holiness, only in this way of believing and walking in Christ according to your new state.* 287

Direction XIV. *That you may thus seek holiness only by believing and walking in Christ, take encouragement from the great advantages of this way, and excellent properties of it.* 338

The sermon on justification.

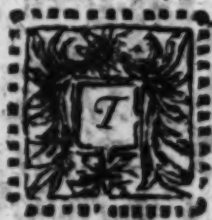
356

23 UC 62

T H E



TO THE
READER.



HIS excellent Treatise of Mr. Marshal's, tho' it be well known among the Godly in England, where it has undergone a two-fold Edition, yet this being the first Time of its Publication in Scotland, where it is but known to a few, we could not refuse, at the Desire of those concerned in the Publication of it among us, to declare, that as we have perused the Book our selves with great Edification and Pleasure; so we know it hath had the high Approbation and Testimony of many eminent for Grace and Holiness, and judge the Publication of it at this Time of Day seasonable among us, for promoting practical Religion and Godliness, and for giving a just View of the vast Odds there is betwixt heathenish Morality adorn'd with
the

To the Reader.

the finest Flourishes of human Rhetorick, and true Gospel Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord. And this our Testimony we judge to be well supported by the Words of that great and evangelick Person Mr. Robert Trail, late Minister of the Gospel in the City of London, in his Postscript to a Pamphlet intituled, A Vindication of the Protestant Doctrine concerning Justification, and of its Preachers and Professors from the unjust Charge of Antinomianism. I think, says he, "That Dr. Owen's excellent Book
" of Justification, and Mr. Marshal's Book of
" the Mystery of Sanctification by Faith in Jesus
" Christ, are such Vindications and Confir-
" mations of the Protestant Doctrine, against
" which I fear no effectual Opposition.— Mr.
" Marshal was a holy and retired Person,
" and is only known to the most of us by his
" Book lately published; The Book is a deep
" practical, well jointed Discourse, and re-
" quires a more than ordinary Attention in
" reading of it with Profit. And if it be singly
" used, I look upon it as one of the most use-
" ful Books the World hath seen for many
" Years: Its Excellence is that it leads the
" serious Reader directly to Jesus Christ, and
" cuts the Sinews and overturns the Foun-
" dation

To the Reader.

" dation of the new Divinity by the same Ar-
 " gument of Gospel Holiness, by which many
 " attempt to overturn the Old; and as it hath
 " already had the Seal of high Approbation by
 " many judicious Ministers and Christians that
 " have read it; so I fear not but it will
 " stand firm as a Rock against all Opposition,
 " and will prove good Seed, and Food, and
 " Light to many hereafter" This Testi-
 mony, abstracting from Humane Frailties
 and Escapes, to which the greatest Men are ly-
 able while they know but in Part, we homologate
 by our Subscriptions.

ALEX. HAMILTON

EBENEZER ERSKINE

RALPH ERSKINE

JA. WARDLAW

JO. GIB

JA. OGILVIE.

} At Stirling

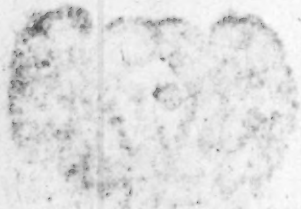
} At Dumfermling.

At Cleish.

At Aberdeen.



23 OCT 62

[illegible]

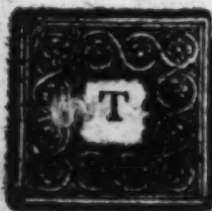


THE
GOSPEL-MYSTERY
OF
SANCTIFICATION.

DIRECTION I.

That we may acceptably perform the Duties of Holiness and Righteousness required in the Law, our first Work is to learn the powerful and effectual Means whereby we may attain to so great an End.

EXPLICATION.



HIS *Direction* may serve instead of a *Preface*, to prepare the understanding and attention of the reader for those that follow: And, *First*, It acquainteth you with the great *End* for which all those Means are designed, that are the principal Subject to be here treated of: The scope of all this

is, To teach you how you may attain to that practice and manner of life, which we call *Holiness*, *Righteousness*, or *Godliness*, *Obedience*, *True Religion*; and which God requireth of us in the *Law*, particularly in the *Moral Law*, *Exod. 20.* summed up in the *Ten Commandments*, and more briefly in those two great *Commandments* of *Love to God* and our *Neighbour*, *Mat. xxii. 37, 39,* and more largely explained throughout the *Holy Scriptures*. My Work is to shew *How the duties of this law may be done*, when they are known: Therefore expect not that I should delay my intent to help you to the *knowledge* of them, by any large exposition of them; which is a work already performed in several catechisms and commentaries: Yet, that you may not miss the mark for want of discerning it, take notice, in few words, that the *Holiness* which I would bring you to, is *spiritual*, *Rom. vii. 14.* It consists not only in *external Works of Piety and Charity*, but in the *holy Thoughts, Imaginations, and Affections* of the soul, and chiefly in *Love*; from whence all other good works must flow, or else they are not acceptable to God: not only in refraining the execution of sinful lusts, but in longing and delighting to do the will of God, and in a cheerful obedience to God, without repining, fretting, grudging at any duty, as if it were a grievous yoke and burden to you.

Take notice further, That the *Law*, which is your *Mark*, is exceeding broad, *Psal. cxix. 96.* and yet not the more easy to be hit, because you must aim to hit it in every duty of it, with a per-
for-

formance of equal breadth, or else you cannot hit it at all, *Ja. ii. 10.* The Lord is not at all loved with that love that is due to him as Lord of all, if he be not loved with all our *Heart, Spirit, and Might.* We are to love every thing in him, his *Justice, Holiness, Sovereign Authority, All-seeing Eye,* and all his *Decrees, Commands, Judgments,* and all his *Doings.* We are to love him not only better than other things, but singly, as *Only Good,* the *Fountain of all Goodness;* and to reject all fleshly and worldly enjoyments, even our own lives, as if we hated them, when they stand in competition with our enjoyment of him, or our duty toward him. We must love him so, as to yield ourselves wholly up to his constant service in all things, and to his disposal of us as our absolute Lord, whether it be for prosperity or adversity, life or death : And for his sake we are to love our neighbour, even all men, whether they be friends or foes to us, and so do to them in all things that concern their honour, life, chastity, worldly wealth, credit and content, whatever we would that men should do to us in the like condition, *Mat. vii. 12.* This spiritual universal Obedience is the great end, to the attainment whereof I am directing you. And that you may not reject mine enterprize as impossible, observe that the most I promise, is no more than an acceptable performance of these duties of the law, such as our gracious merciful God will certainly delight in, and be pleas'd with, during our state of imperfection in this world, and such as will end in perfection of holiness, and all happiness in the world to come.

Before I proceed further, stay your thoughts a while, in the contemplation of the great dignity and excellency of these duties of the Law, that you may aim at the performance of them as your end, with so high an esteem as may cast an amiable lustre upon the ensuing discovery of the means. The principal duties of *love to God above all*, and to *each other for his sake*, from whence all the other duties flow, are so excellent, that I cannot imagine any more noble work for the holy angels in their glorious Sphere: They are the chief works for which we were at first framed in the image of God, engraven upon man in the first creation, and for which that beautiful image is renewed upon us in our new Creation and Sanctification by *Jesus Christ*, and shall be perfected in our Glorification. They are works which depend *not* meerly on the sovereignty of the will of God, to be commanded or forbidden, or left indifferent, or changed, or abolished at his pleasure, as other works that belong either to the judicial or ceremonial Law, or to the means of salvation prescribed by the gospel; *but* they are in their own nature, holy, just, and good, *Rom. vii. 12.* and meet for us to perform, because of our natural relation to our Creator and fellow-creatures; so that they have an inseparable dependance upon the holiness of the Will of God, and an indispensable establishment thereby. They are works sufficient to render the performers holy in all manner of conversation, by the fruits which they bring forth, if no other duties had ever been commanded, and by which the performance of all other duties is sufficient.

sufficiently establish'd as soon as they are command-
ed; and without which there can be no holiness
of heart and life imagined, and to which it was
one great honour of *Mosaical*, and is now of
Evangelical ordinances, to be subservient for the
performance of them, as means which shall cease,
when their end, this never-failing charity, is
perfectly attained, 1 *Cor.* xiii. They are duties
which we were *naturally* obliged to, by that rea-
son and understanding which God gave to man
at his *first* creation, to discern what was just and
meet for him to do, and to which even *Heathens*
are still obliged by the light of nature, without
any written law, or supernatural revelation,
Rom. ii. 14, 15. Therefore they are called *natu-
ral Religion*, and the Law that requireth them is
called the *natural* Law, and also the *moral* Law,
because the manners of all men, *Infidels* as well
as Christians, ought to be conformed to it (and,
if they had been fully conformable, they would
not have come short of eternal happiness, *Mat.* v.
19. *Luke* x. 27, 28.) under the Penalty of the
wrath of God for the violation of it. This is the
true *Morality* which God approveth of, consisting
in conformity of all our actions to the moral Law;
And if those that in these Days contend so
highly for *Morality*, do understand no other than
this, I dare join with them in assert-
ing, that the best morally honest
man is the greatest Saint, and that
Morality is the principal part of
true Religion, and the Test of all
other parts, without which Faith is dead, and all
other religious performances are a vain Shew.

*The greatest
Saint is the
greatest Mo-
ralist.*

and meer hypocrisy ; for the faithful and true Witness hath testified concerning the *two* great Moral Commandments of *Love to God*, and *our Neighbour*, that there is none other Commandment *greater* than these, and that on them hang *all* the Law and the Prophets, *Mat. xii. 31. Mat. xxii.*

The *second* thing contained in this introductory direction, is the necessity of learning the powerful and effectual means, whereby this great and excellent end may be accomplished, and of making this the *first* work to be done, *before* we can expect success in any attempt for the attainment of it.

This is an advertisement very needful, because many are apt to skip over the lesson concerning the Means (that will fill up this whole Treatise) as superfluous and useless. When once they know the nature and excellency of the duties of the Law, they account nothing wanting but diligent performances; and they rush blindly upon immediate practice, making more haste than good speed. They are quick in promising, *Exod. xix. 8. All that the Lord hath spoken we will do*, without sitting down, and counting the cost. They look upon holiness as only the *Means* of an end, eternal Salvation; not as an end itself, requiring any great Means for attaining to the practice of it. The enquiry of most, when they begin to have a sense of Religion, is, *What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal Life?* *Mat. xix. 16.* Note, how shall I be enabled to do any thing that is good? Yea, many that are accounted powerful preachers spend all their zeal in the earnest pressing the immediate practice of the Law, without

out any discovery of the effectual Means of performance; as if the works of righteousness were like those servile employments, that need no skill and artifice at all, but industry and activity. That you may not stumble at the threshold of a religious life by this common oversight, I shall endeavour to make you sensible, that it is *not* enough for you to know the *Matter* and *Reason* of your Duty, but that you are also to learn the *powerful* and *effectual Means* of performance, before you can successfully apply yourselves to immediate practice. And for this end I shall lay before you the considerations following.

1st, We are all by nature void of all strength and ability to perform acceptably that holiness and righteousness which the Law requireth, and are dead in trespasses and sins, and children of wrath, by the sin of our first father *Adam*, as the scripture witnesseth, *Rom. v. 12, 15, 18, 19. Eph. ii. 1, 2, 3. Rom. viii. 7, 8.* This doctrine of *original Sin*, which *Protestants* generally profess, is a firm basis and ground-work to the assertion now to be proved, and to many other assertions in this whole discourse. If we believe it to be true, we cannot rationally encourage ourselves to attempt an holy practice, until we are acquainted with some powerful and effectual Means to enable us for it. While Man continued upright in the image of God, as he was at first created, *Eccles. vii. 29. Gen. i. 27.* he could do the will of God sincerely as soon as he knew it; but when he was fallen, he was quickly afraid, because of his nakedness, but could not help it at all, until God discovered to him the Means of restoration,

Gen. iii. 10, 13. Say to a *strong healthy servant*, go, and he goeth; come, and he cometh; do this, and he doth it: But a *bed-ridden servant* must know first how he may be enabled. No doubt the fallen angels know the necessity of holiness, and tremble at the guilt of their sin; but they know of no Means for them to attain to holiness effectually, and so continue still in their wickedness. It was in vain for *Samson* to say, *I will go out as at other times before, and shake my self*, when he had sinned away his strength, *Judg. xvi. 20.* Men shew themselves strangely forgetful or hypocritical, in professing original Sin in their *Prayers, Catechisms, and Confessions of Faith*; and yet urging upon themselves and others, the practice of the Law, without the consideration of any strengthening, enlivening Means, as if there were *no* want of ability, *but only* of Activity.

2dly, Those that doubt of, or deny the doctrine of *original Sin*, may all of them know concerning themselves (if their consciences be not blind) that the exact justice of God is against them, and they are under the curse of God, and sentence of death for their actual sins, if God should enter into judgment with them, *Rom. i. 32. and ii. 2. and iii. 9. Gal. iii. 10.* Is it possible for a man that knoweth this to be his case, and hath not learned any means of getting out of it, to practise the Law immediately? To love God and every thing in him, his Justice, Holiness, Power, as well as his Mercy, and to yield himself willingly to the disposal of God, tho' God should inflict sudden death upon him? Is there no skill or artifice at all required

quired in this case, to encourage the fainting soul to the practice of universal obedience?

3dly, Tho' heathens might know much of the work of the law by the common light of natural reason and understanding, *Rom. ii. 14.* yet the effectual means of performance cannot be discovered by that light, and therefore are wholly to be learned by the teaching of supernatural revelation. For what is our natural light, but some sparks and glimmerings of that which was in *Adam* before the fall? And even then in its brightest meridian, it was not sufficient to direct *Adam* how to recover ability to walk holily, if once he should lose it by sin; nor to assure him beforehand that God would vouchsafe to him any means of recovery: God had set nothing but death before his eyes in case of transgression, *Gen. ii. 17.* and therefore he hid himself from God, when the shame of his nakedness appear'd, as expecting no favour from him. We are like sheep gone astray, and know not which way to return, until we hear the shepherd's voice. Can these dry bones live to God in holiness? O Lord, thou knowest, and we cannot know it, except we learn it of thee.

4thly, Sanctification, whereby our hearts and lives are conformed to the law, is a grace of God communicated to us by means, as well as justification, and by means of teaching and learning something that we cannot see without the word, *Acts xxvi. 17, 18.* There are several things pertaining to life and godliness, that are given thro' Knowledge, *2 Pet. i. 2, 3.* There is a form of doctrine made use of by God to make people free

free from sin, and servants of righteousness, *Rom. vi. 17, 18.* And there are several pieces of the whole armour of God necessary to be known and put on, that we may stand against sin and satan in the evil day, *Eph. vi. 13.* Shall we slight and overlook the way of sanctification, when the learning the way of justification hath been counted worth so many elaborate treatises.

5thly, God hath given in the holy scriptures by his inspiration, plentiful instruction in righteousness, *that we may be thoroughly furnished for every good work, 2 Tim. iii, 16, 17.* especially since the day spring from on high hath visited us, by the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ, to guide our feet in the way of peace, *Luke i. 78, 79.* If God condescend to us very low, to teach us this way in the scriptures, and by Christ himself, it must needs be greatly necessary for us to sit down at his feet and learn it.

6thly, The way of attaining to Godliness is so far from being known without learning out of the holy scripture, that when it is here plainly revealed, we cannot learn it so easily as the duties of the law, which are known in part by the light of nature, and therefore more easily assented to. It is the way whereby the dead are brought to live unto God, and therefore doubtless it is far above all the thoughts and conjectures of human wisdom. It is the way of salvation, wherein God will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent, by discovering things by his spirit, that the natural man receiveth not; for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them, because they

are

are spiritually discerned, 1 Cor. i. 19, 21. and ii. 14. Without controversy, *great is the Mystery of godliness*, 1 Tim. iii. 16. The learning of it requireth double work; because we must unlearn many of our former deeply rooted notions, and become fools that we may be wise. We must pray earnestly to the Lord to teach us, as well as search the scriptures, that we may get this knowledge. *O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes. Teach me O Lord, the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it to the end*, Psal. cxix. 5, 33. *Teach me to do thy will*, Psal. cxliiii. 10. *The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God*, 2 Theff. iii. 5. Surely these saints did not so much want teaching and direction concerning the duties of the law to be done, as concerning the way and means whereby they might do them.

7thly, The certain knowledge of these powerful and effectual Means, is of greatest importance and necessity for our establishment in the true faith, and avoiding errors contrary thereunto: For we cannot rationally doubt, that the moral duties of love to God and our neighbour are absolutely necessary to true religion, so that it cannot subsist without them. And from this principle we may firmly conclude, that nothing repugnant to the practice of these holy duties, ought to be received as a point of faith delivered to us by the most holy God; and that whatsoever is truly necessary, powerful and effectual to bring us to the practice of them, ought to be believ'd as proceeding from God, because it hath the image of his holiness and righteousness engraven

graven upon it. This is a sure test and touchstone, which those that are seriously religious will use to try spirits, and their doctrines, whether they be of God or no: And they cannot rationally approve any doctrine as religious that is not according to godliness, *1 Tim. vi. 3.* By this touchstone Christ proveth his doctrine to be of God, because therein he seeketh the glory of God, *John vii. 17, 18.* And he teacheth us to know false prophets by their fruit, *Mat. vii. 15, 16.* wherein the fruits which their doctrine tendeth unto, are especially to be consider'd. Hence it appeareth, that until we know what are the effectual means of holiness, and what not, we want a necessary touchstone of divine truths, and may be easily deceiv'd by false doctrine, or brought to live in meer suspense, concerning the truth of any religion, like the *Seekers*. And if you mistake, and think those means to be effectual that are not, and those that are effectual to be weak, or of a contrary effect, your error in this will be a false touchstone to try other doctrines, whereby you will readily approve of errors, and refuse the truth; which hath been a *pernicious Occasion* of many errors in religion in late days: Get but a true touchstone, by learning this lesson, and you will be able to try the various doctrines of *Protestants, Papists, Arminians, Socinians, Antinomians, Quakers*, and to discover the truth and cleave to it; with much satisfaction to your judgment, amongst all the janglings and controversies of these times. Hereby you may discover whether the Protestant religion establish'd among us have in it any sinews of *Antinomianism*,
whether

whether it be guilty of any insufferable defect in practical principles, and deserves to be altered and turned almost upside down, with new doctrines and methods, as some learned men in late time have judged by their touch stones.

8thly, It is also of great importance and necessity for our establishment in holy practice: For we cannot apply ourselves to the practice of holiness with hope of success, except we have some faith concerning the divine assistance, which we have no ground to expect, if we use not such means as God hath appointed to work by. *God meeteth them that remember him in his own ways, Isa. lxiv. 5. And makes a breach upon them that seek him not after the due order, 1 Chron. xv. 13.* He hath chosen and ordained such means of sanctification and salvation as are for his own glory, and those only he blesteth to us; and he crowneth no man that striveth, except he *strive lawfully, 2 Tim. ii. 5.* Experience sheweth plentifully, both of *Heathens* and *Christians*, how pernicious, ignorance or mistaking of these effectual means, are, to an holy practice. The *Heathens* generally fell short of an acceptable performance of those duties of the law which they knew, because of their ignorance in this point. (1.) May *Christians* content themselves with external performances, because they never knew how they might attain to spiritual service. (2.) And *many* reject the way of holiness as austere and unpleasant, because they know not how to cut off a right hand, or pluck out a right eye, without intollerable pain; whereas they would find the ways of wisdom (if they

they knew them) *to be ways of pleasantness, and all her paths to be peace,* Prov. iii. 17. This occasioneth the putting off repentance from time to time, as an uncouth thing. (3.) Many others set upon the practice of holiness with a fervent zeal, and run very fast, but tread not a step in the right way, and finding themselves frequently disappointed and overcome by their lusts, they at last give over the work, and turn to wallow again in the mire; which hath occasioned several treatises, to shew how far a reprobate may go in the way of religion, whereby many weak saints are discouraged, accounting that these reprobates have gone further than themselves; whereas most of them never knew the right way, nor trode one step aright in it, *for few there be that find it,* Mat. vii. 14. (4.) Some of these ignorant zealots do inhumanly macerate their bodies with fasting, and other austerities to kill their lusts, and when they see their lusts are still too hard for them, they fall into despair, and are driven by horror of conscience to make away themselves wickedly, to the scandal of religion. Peradventure God may bless my discovery of the powerful means of holiness, so far as to save some one or other from killing themselves; and such a fruit as this would countervail my labour; tho' I hope God will enlarge the hearts of many by it, to run with great chearfulness, joy and thanksgiving, in the ways of his commandments.

DIRECTION II.

Several endowments and qualifications are necessary to enable us for the immediate practice of the law: Particularly we must have an inclination and propensity of our hearts thereunto; and therefore we must be well persuaded of our reconciliation with God, and of our future enjoyment of the everlasting heavenly happiness, and of sufficient strength both to will and perform all duties acceptably, until we come to the enjoyment of that happiness.

EXPLICATION.

Those means that are next to the attainment of the great end aimed at, are first to be discovered, that we may learn how to get them by other means expressed in the following directions: Therefore I have named here several qualifications and endowments that are necessary to make up that holy frame and state of the soul, whereby it is furnished and enabled to practise the law immediately, and that not only in the beginning, but in the continuation of that practice: And therefore note diligently, that these endowments must continue in us during the present life, or else our ability for an holy life will be lost, and they must be before practice, not in any distance of time, but only as the cause is before the effect. I do not say, that I have named particularly all such necessary qualifications; but this much I dare say, that he that gaineth

gaineth these may by the same means gain any other that should be ranked with them. And this is a matter worthy of our serious consideration; for few understand that any special endowments are required to furnish us for an holy practice, more than for other voluntary actions. The first *Adam* had excellent endowments bestowed upon him for an holy practice, when he was first created according to the image of God; and the second *Adam* had endowments more excellent to enable him for an harder task of obedience. And seeing obedience is grown more difficult, by reason of the opposition and temptations that it meeteth with since the fall of *Adam*, we that are to be imitators of Christ, had need have very choice endowments, as Christ had; at least as good, or something better than *Adam* had at first, as our work is harder than his. *What king going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?* And shall we dare to rush into battle against all the powers of darkness, all worldly terrors and allurements, and our own inbred domineering corruptions; without considering whether we have sufficient spiritual furniture to stand in the evil day? Yet many content themselves with such an ability to will and do their duty, as they would have to be given to men universally, whereby they are no better enabled for the spiritual battle than the generality of the world, that lie vanquished under the wicked one, and therefore their standing is not at all secured by it.

it. It is an hard matter to find what this universal ability is, that so many contend so earnestly for, of what it consisteth, by what means it is conveyed to us and maintained.

Bodily agility hath spirits, nerves, ligaments, bones to subsist by; but this spiritual universal ability seemeth to be some occult quality, that no sufficient account can be given how it is conveyed, or of what it is constituted: That none may deceive themselves, and miscarry in their enterprizes for holiness, by depending on such a weak occult quality, I have here shewed *four* endowments, of which a true ability for the practice of holiness must necessarily be constituted, and by which it must subsist and be maintained; intending to shew afterward, by what means they are given unto us, and whether the inclination or propensity here mentioned be perfect or imperfect. And they are of such a mysterious nature, that some who own the necessity of endowments to frame them for holiness, are prone to think that less than these will serve, and that some of these frame us rather for licentiousness than holiness, as they are here placed before any actual performance of the moral law; and that some things contrary to them would put us into a better frame for holiness. Against all such surmises I shall endeavour such a demonstration of these endowments particularly, as may gain the assent of right reason, insisting on them in the same order wherein I have placed them in the direction.

In the *first* place, I assert that an *inclination* and *propensity* of heart to the duties of the law, is necessary to frame and enable us for the immediate practice of them; and I mean not such a blind propensity as inanimate creatures and brutes have to their natural operations, but such an one as is meet for intelligent creatures, whereby they are by the conduct of reason prone and bent to approve and chuse their duty, and averse to the practice of sin: And therefore I have intimated that the *three* other endowments mentioned in the direction, are subservient to *this* as the chief of all, which are sufficient to make it a rational propensity. This is contrary to those that out of zeal for obedience, but not according to knowledge, contend so earnestly for free-will as a necessary and sufficient endowment to enable us to perform our duty, when once we are convinc'd of it, and of our obligation to it, and that extol this endowment as the great benefit that universal redemption hath blessed all mankind with, though they consider this free-will without any actual inclination to good; yea, they cannot but acknowledge that in most of mankind that have it, it is incumbred with an actual bent and propensity of the heart altogether to evil. Such a free-will as this is, can never free us from slavery to sin and satan, and fit us for the practice of the law, and therefore is not worthy the pains of those that contend so hotly for it. Neither is the will so free as is necessary for the practice of holiness, until it be endued with an inclination and propensity thereunto; as may appear by the following arguments.

First,

First, The duties of the law are of such a nature, that they cannot possibly be performed while there is wholly an aversion or mere indifference of the heart to the performance of them, and no good inclination and propensity towards the practice of them: Because the chief of all the commandments, is to love the Lord with our whole heart, might and soul, to love every thing that is in him, to love his will and all his ways, and to like them as good, and all duties must be influenced in their performance by this love; we must delight to do the will of God, it must be sweeter to us than the *honey or honey-comb*, Psal. xl. 8. Job xxiii. 12. Psal. lxiii. 1. and cxix. 20. and xix. 10. And this love, liking, delight, longing, thirsting, sweet-relishing, must be continued to the end; and the first indeliberate motion of lust must be regulated by love to God and our neighbour; and sin must be lusted against, *Gal. v. 17.* and abhorred, *Psal. xxxvi. 4.* If it were true obedience (as some would have it) to love our duty only as a market-man loveth foul ways to the market, or as a sick man loveth an unpleasant medicinal potion, or as a captive slave loveth his hard work for fear of a greater evil; then it might be performed with averseness or want of inclination; but we must love it, as the market-man gain, as the sick man health, as pleasant meat and drink, as the captive liberty. Doubtless there can be no power in the will, for this kind of service, without an agreeableness of our inclination to the will of God, a heart according to his own heart, an aversion of our hearts from

sin, and a kind of antipathy against sin; for we know the proverb, *Like loveth like*; there must be an agreeableness in the person or thing beloved to the disposition of the lover. *Love to God must flow from a clean heart*, 1 Tim. i. 5. an heart cleansed from evil propensities and Inclinations. And reason will tell us, that the first motions of lust which fall not under our choice and deliberation, cannot be avoided without a fixed propensity of the heart to holiness.

Secondly, The image of God (wherein God according to his infinite wisdom judged it meet to frame the first *Adam in righteousness and true holiness and uprightness*, Gen. i. 27. Ephes. iv. 24. Eccles. vii. 29.) consisted in an actual bent and propensity of heart to the practice of holiness, not in a mere power of will to chuse good or evil; for this in it self is neither holy nor unholy, but only a ground-work, on which either the image of God or of Satan, may be drawn; nor in an indifference of propensity to the choice of sin or duty, for this is a wicked disposition in an intelligent creature that knoweth his duty and fitteth us only to halt between God and *Baal*. God set *Adam's* soul at first wholly in a right bent and inclination, though *Adam* might act contrary to it if he would; as we may be prevailed upon to do some things contrary to our natural or rational inclinations, and it is easy to fail of our duty, though great preparation and furniture be required for the performance of it. The second *Adam* also, the Lord Jesus Christ, *was born an holy thing*,
 Luke

Luke i. 35. with an holy disposition of his soul and propensity to goodness; and can we reasonably hope to arise to the life of holiness, from which the first *Adam* fell; or to be imitators of Christ, since duty is made so difficult by the fall, if we be not renewed in a measure according to the same image of God, and enabled with such a propensity and inclination?

Thirdly, Original corruption (whereby we are dead to God and Godliness from the birth, and made willing slaves to the performance of all actual sins, until the son of God make us free) consisteth in a propensity and inclination of the heart to sin, and averseness to holiness. Without this propensity to sin, what can that *law of sin in our members be, that warreth against the law of our mind, and leadeth us captive to the service of sin?* Rom. vii. 23. What is that poison in us, for which men may be called *Serpents, Vipers?* What is that *spirit of whoredoms in men, by reason of which they will not frame their doings to turn to God?* Hos. v. 4. How is the *Tree first corrupt, and then its fruit corrupt?* Matth. xii. 33. How can man be said to be *abominable and filthy, that drinketh iniquity like water?* Job xv. 16. How should the *mind of the flesh be continual enmity to the law of God?* Rom. viii. 7. I know there is also a blindness of understanding, and other things belonging to original corruption, which conduce to this evil propensity of the will; but yet this propensity itself is the great evil, the indwelling sin which produceth all actual sins, and must of necessity be removed or restrained, by

restoring that contrary inclination, wherein the image of God consisted, or else we shall be backward and reprobate to every good work, and whatever freedom the will hath, it shall be employed only in the Service of sin.

Fourthly, God restoreth his people to holiness, by giving to them, *a new heart, and a new spirit, and taking away the heart of stone out of their flesh, and giving them an heart of flesh*, Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. And he *circumciseth their hearts to love him with their whole heart and soul*. And he requireth that we should be transformed in the *renewing of our mind, that we may prove what is his acceptable Will*, Rom. xii. 2. And David prayeth for the same end, *that God would create in him a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within him*, Psal. li. 10. If any one can judge that this new, clean, circumcised heart, this heart of flesh, this new right spirit, is such an one as hath no actual inclination and propensity to good, but only a power to chuse good or evil, undeservedly call'd free-will, with a present inclination to evil, or an indifferency of propensity to both contraries, fit will not be worth my labour to convince such a judgment; only let him consider whether David could account such an heart to be clean and right, when he prayeth, *Psal. cxix. 36. incline mine heart to thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.*

The **SECOND** endowment necessary to enable us for the immediate practice of holiness, and concurring with the other two that follow, to work in us a rational propensity to this practice, is that *we be well perswaded of our reconciliation with God.*

God. We must reckon that the breach of amity which sin hath made between God and us, is made up by a firm reconciliation to his love and favour; and herein I include the great benefit of justification, as the means whereby we are reconciled to God, which is described in Scripture, either by forgiving our Sins, or by the imputation of righteousness to us, *Rom. iv. 5, 6, 7.* because both are contained in one and the same justifying act; as one act of illumination comprehends expulsi- on of darkness and introduction of light; one act of repentance containeth mortification of sin, and vivification to righteousness; and every motion from any thing to its contrary, is but one and the same, though it may be expressed by divers names, with respect to either of the two contrary terms, the one of which is abolished, the other introduced by it. This is a great mystery, (contrary to the apprehensions, not only of the vulgar, but of some learned divines) that we must be reconciled to God, and justified by the remission of our sins, and imputation of righteousness, before any sincere obedience to the law, that we may be enabled for the practice of it. They account that this doctrine tendeth to the subversion of an holy practice, and is a great pillar of *Antinomianism*; and that the only way to establish sincere obedience, is to make it rather a condition to be performed before our actual justification and reconciliation with God. Therefore some late divines have thought fit to bring the doctrine of former *Protestants* concerning justification to their anvil, and to hammer it into another form, that it might be more free

from *Antinomianism*, and effectual to secure an holy practice; but their labour is vain and pernicious, tending to *Antinomian* prophaneness, or painted hypocrisie at best; neither can the true practice of holiness be secure, except the perswasion of our justification and reconciliation with God be first obtained without works of the law, that we may be enabled thereby to do them, as I shall now prove by several arguments, intending also to shew in the following directions, that such a perswasion of the love of God, as God giveth to his people, tendeth only to holiness, though a misperswasion of it be in many an occasion of licentiousness.

First, When the first *Adam* was framed for the practice of holiness at his creation, he was highly in the favour of God, and had no sin imputed to him, and was accounted righteous in the sight of God, according to his present state, because he was made upright according to God's image. And there is no Reason to doubt but that these qualifications were to his advantage for an holy practice, and the wisdom of God judged them good for that end; and as soon as he lost them, he became dead in Sin. The second *Adam* also in our nature was the beloved of the father, accounted righteous in the sight of God, without the imputation of any sin to him, except what his office was to bear on the behalf of others. And can we reasonably expect to be imitators of Christ, by performing more difficult obedience than the first *Adam's* was before the fall, except the like advantages be given to us, by reconciliation and remission of Sins; and imputation of a righteousness

ness given by God to us when we have none of our own.

Secondly, Those that know their natural deadness under the power of sin and satan, are fully convinced, that if God leave them to their own hearts, they can do nothing but sin, and that they can do no good work except it please God of his great love and mercy to work it in them, *Job. viii. 36. Philip. ii. 13. Rom. viii. 7, 8.* Therefore that they may be encouraged and rationally inclined to holiness, they must hope that God will work savingly in them. Now I leave it to considerate men to judge, whether such an hope can be well grounded without a good perswasion of such a reconciliation and saving-love of God to us, as depend not upon any precedent goodness of our works, but is a cause sufficient to produce them effectually in us: Yea we know further, (if we know our selves sufficiently) that our Death in sin proceeded from the guilt of the first sin of *Adam*, and the sentence denounced against it, *Gen. ii. 17.* And that it is still maintain'd in us by the guilt of sin, and the curse of the law, and that spiritual life will never be given us to free us from that dominion, except this guilt and curse be removed from us, which is done by actual justification, *Gal. iii. 13, 14. Rom. vi. 14.* And this is sufficient to make us despair of living to God in holiness; while we apprehend our selves to be under the curse and wrath of God, by reason of our transgressions and sins still lying upon us, *Ezek. xxxiii. 10.*

Thirdly, The nature of the duties of the law is such, as requireth an apprehension of our re-
con-

conciliation with God, and his hearty love and favour towards us for the doing of them. The great duty is love to God with our whole heart, and not such a contemplative love, as *Philosophers* may have to the object of sciences, which they are concern'd in no further than to please their fancies in the knowledge of them; but a practical love whereby we are willing that God should be absolute Lord and governour of us and all the world, to dispose of us and all others according to his will, as to our temporal and everlasting condition, and that he should be the only portion and happiness of all those that are happy; a love whereby we like every thing in him as he is our Lord, his justice as well as any other attribute, without wishing or desiring that he were better than he is, and whereby we desire that his will may be done upon us and all others, whether for prosperity or adversity, life or death, and whereby we can heartily praise him for all things, and delight in our obedience to him, in doing his will, though we suffer that which is never so grievous to us, even present death. Consider these things well, and you may easily perceive that our spirits are not in a fit frame for the doing of them, while we apprehend our selves under the curse and wrath of God, or while we are under prevailing suspicions that God will prove an Enemy to us at last. Slavish fear may extort some slavish hypocritical performances from us, such as that of *Pharaoh* in letting the *Israelites* go, sore against his will; but the duty of love cannot be extorted and forced by fear, but it must be won and sweetly allured by an

an apprehension of God's love and goodness towards us, as that eminent and beloved disciple testifieth; 1 *Joh.* iv. 18, 19. *There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment: He that feareth is not made perfect in love, we love him because he first loved us.* Observe here, that we cannot be beforehand with God in loving him before we apprehend his love to us. And consult your own experience, if you have any true love to God, whether it were not wrought in you by a Sense of God's love first towards you. All the goodness and excellency of God cannot render him an amiable object to us, except we apprehend him an agreeable good to us. I question not but the devils know the excellency of God's nature, as well as our greatest *Metaphysical* speculators, and this doth but fill them the more with tormenting horror and trembling that is contrary to love, *Jam.* ii. 19. The greater God's excellency and perfection is, the greater evil he is to us if he hate us and curse us; and therefore the principle of self-preservation deeply rooted in our natures, hindereth us from loving that which we apprehend as our own destruction: If a man be an enemy to us, we can love him for the sake of our loving reconciled God, because his love will make man's hatred to work for our good; but if God himself be our enemy, for whose sake can we love him? Who is there that can free us from the evil of his enmity, and turn it to our advantage, until he be pleased to reconcile himself to us?

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Our conscience must of necessity be first purged from dead works that we may serve the living God, and this is done by actual remission of sin, procured by the blood of Christ, and manifested to our consciences, as appeareth by Christ's dying for this end, *Heb. ix. 14, 15.* and *x. 1, 2. 4, 14, 17, 22.* That conscience whereby we judge our selves to be under the guilt of sin and wrath of God, is accounted an evil conscience in scripture, though it perform its office truly; because it is caused by the evil of sin, and will it self be a cause of our committing more sin, until it can judge us to be justified from all sin, and received into the favour of God. Love, which is the end of the law, must proceed from a good conscience, as well as from any other cleanness of heart, *1 Tim. i. 5.* *David's* mouth could not be opened to shew forth the praise of God, until he was delivered from blood-guiltiness, *Psal. li. 14, 15.* This evil guilty conscience, whereby we judge that God is our enemy, and that his justice is against us to our everlasting condemnation, by reason of our sins, doth strongly maintain and increase the dominion of sin and satan in us, and worketh most mischievous effects in the soul against godliness, even to bring the soul to hate God, and to wish there were no God, no heaven, no hell, so we might escape the punishment due to us. It so disaffecteth people toward God, that they cannot endure to think, or speak, or hear of him and his law, but strive rather to put him out of their minds by fleshly pleasures and worldly employments, and thus they are alienated from all true
 reli-

religion, only blinding it, and stopping the mouth of it, it produceth zeal in many outside religious performances, and also false religion, idolatry, and the most inhumane superstitions in the world. I have often considered by what manner of working any sin could effectually destroy the whole image of God in the first *Adam*; and I conclude it was by working first an evil guilty conscience in him, whereby he judged that the just God was against him, and cursed him for that one sin, and this was enough to work a shameful nakedness by disorderly lusts, a turning his love wholly from God to the creature, and a desire to be hidden from the presence of God, *Gen. iii. 8, 10.* which was a total destruction of the image of God's holiness. And we have cause to judge that from the same cause proceedeth the continual malice, rancour, rage, and blasphemy of the devil, and many notorious wicked men, against God and godliness. Some may think *Job* uncharitable in suspecting not merely that his sons had sinned, but that they had been so abominably wicked as to curse God in their hearts, *Job i. 5.* but *Job* well understood that if the guilt of any ordinary sin lie upon the conscience, it will make the soul to wish secretly that God were not, or that he was not so just a judge, which is a secret cursing of God, that cannot be avoided until our consciences be purged from the guilt of sin, by the offering of Christ for us, which was then figured out by the burnt-offerings of *Job* for his sons.

Fifthly, God hath abundantly discovered to us in his word, that his method in bringing men from

from sin to holiness of life, is first to make them know that he loveth them, and that their sins are blotted out. When he gave the ten commandments on mount *Sinai*, he first discovered himself to be their God, that had given them a sure pledge of his salvation by their delivery from *Egypt*, in the preface, *Exod. xx. 2.* And during all the time of the *Old Testament*, God was pleased to make the entrance into Religion to be by *Circumcision*, which was not only a sign, but also a seal of the righteousness of Faith, whereby God justifieth people, while they are considered as ungodly, *Rom. iv. 11, 5.* and this seal was administered to children of *eight* days old, before they could perform any condition of sincere obedience, for their justification, that their furniture for an holy practice might be ready before hand. Furthermore, in the time of the *Old Testament*, God appointed divers washings, and the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, to prepare and sanctifie them for other parts of his worship in his tabernacle and temple, to figure out his purging their consciences from dead works by the blood of Christ, that they might serve the living God, *Heb. ix. 9, 10, 13, 14, 22.* This, I say, was then figurative Sanctification, as the word Sanctification is taken in a large sense, comprehending all things that prepare us for the service of God, chiefly the remission of Sin, *Heb. x. 10, 14, 18.* Though if it be taken in a strict sense, respecting only our conformity to the Law, it must necessarily be placed after justification, according to the usual method

method of protestant divines. God also minded them of the necessity of purging away their Guilt first, that their Service might be acceptable, by commanding them to offer the sin-offering before the burnt-offering, *Lev. v. 8.* and *xvi. 3, 11.* And least the guilt of their sins should pollute the service of God, notwithstanding all their particular expiations, God was pleased to appoint a general atonement for all their sins one day every Year, wherein the Scape-Goat was to bear upon him all their iniquities, unto a Land not inhabited, *Lev. xvi. 22, 34.* Under the *New Testament* God useth the same method in loving us first, and washing us from our sins by the blood of Christ, that he may make us priests to offer the sacrifices of praise and all good works to God even the father. He entereth us into his service by washing away our sins in *Baptism*, he feedeth and strengtheneth us for his service by Remissions of sins given to us in the blood of Christ at the Lord's supper, he exhorteth us to obey him, because he hath already loved us, and our sins are already pardoned. *Forgive one another even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Be ye therefore Followers of God as dear Children, and walk in love as Christ hath loved us, Eph. iv. 32. and v. 1, 2.* I write unto you little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name sake. Love not the world, neither the things of the world, *1 John ii. 12, 15.* I might quote abundance of texts of the same nature. We may clearly see by all this, that God hath accounted it a matter of great importance.

tance, and hath condescended to take wonderful care in providing plentiful means both under the *Old and New Testament*, that his people might be first cleansed from guilt, and reconciled to himself, to fit them for the acceptable practice of holiness. Away then with all the contrary methods of the new divinity.

The **THIRD** endowment necessary to enable us for the practice of holiness, without which a persuasion of our reconciliation with God, would be of little efficacy to work in us a rational propensity to it, is, *that we be persuaded of our future enjoyment of the everlasting heavenly happiness*. This must precede our holy practice as a cause disposing and alluring us to it. This assertion hath several sorts of adversaries to oppose it. Some account that a persuasion of our own future happiness, before we have persevered in sincere obedience, tendeth to *Licentiousness*; and that the way to do good works, is rather to make them a *Condition* necessary for the *procuring* of this persuasion. Others condemn all works that we are allured or stirred up to by the future enjoyment of the heavenly happiness, as *legal, mercenary*, flowing from self-love, and not from any pure love to God; and they figure out sincere Godliness by a man bearing fire in one hand to burn up heaven, and water in the other to quench hell, intimating, that the true service of God must not proceed at all from hope of reward, or fear of punishment, but only from love. To establish the truth asserted against the errors that
are

are so contrary to it, and to each other, I shall propose the ensuing considerations.

First, The nature of the duties of the law is such, that they cannot be sincerely and universally practised without this endowment. That this endowment must be present in us, is sufficiently proved already by all that I have said concerning the necessity of the perswasion of our firm reconciliation with God by our justification, to prepare us for this practice, because that includeth a perswasion of this future happiness, or else it is of little worth. All that I have to add here is, that sincere obedience cannot rationally subsist, except it be allured, encouraged, and supported by this perswasion. Let me therefore suppose a *Sadducee* believing no happiness after this life, and put the question, Can such an one love God with his whole heart, might, and soul? Will he not think it reasonable rather to lessen and moderate his love towards God, lest he should be overmuch troubled to part with him by death? We account it most reasonable to sit loose in our affections from things that we must part with. Can such an one be satisfied with the enjoyment of God as his happiness? Will he not rather account that the enjoyment of God, and all religious duties are vanities as well as other things, because in a little time we shall have no more benefit by them than if they had never been? How can such an one be willing to lay down his life for the sake of God, when by his death he must part with God as well as with other things? How can he willingly chuse afflictions

rather than sin, when he shall be more miserable in this life for it, and not at all happy hereafter. I grant, if affliction come unavoidably upon such a person, he may reasonably judge that patience is better for him than impatience; but it will displease him that he is forced to the use of such a virtue, and he will be prone to fret and murmur at his creator, and to wish he had never been, rather than to endure such miseries, and to be comforted only with vain transitory enjoyments. I think I have said enough to shew how unfurnished such a man is for holiness; and he that will burn up heaven, and quench hell that he may serve God out of love, doth thereby leave himself little better furnished than the *Sadducee*; the one denieth them, the other will *not* have them at all to be considered in this case.

Secondly, The sure hope of the glory of heaven, is made use of ordinarily by God since the fall of *Adam*, as an encouragement to the practice of holiness; as the scripture doth abundantly shew, *Christ, the great Pattern of Holiness, for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the Shame, Heb. xii. 2.* And though I cannot say that the first *Adam* had such a sure hope to preserve him in innocency, yet he had instead of it the present possession of an earthly paradise, and an happy estate in it; which he knew would last if he continued in holiness, or be changed into a better happiness. The apostles did not faint under affliction, because they knew that it wrought for them *a far more exceeding and eternal*

eternal weight of glory, 2 Cor. iv. 16, 17. The believing Hebrews took joyfully the Spoiling of their Goods, knowing in themselves that they had in Heaven a better and an enduring Substance, Heb. x. 34. The apostle Paul accounts all his sufferings unprofitable, were it not for a glorious resurrection; and that Christians would be of all men most miserable, and that the doctrines of the Epicures were rather to be chosen, *Let us eat and drink, for To-morrow we shall die.* And he exhorts the Corinthians to be abundant in the Work of the Lord, knowing that their Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord, 1 Cor. xv. 58. As worldly hope keepeth the world at work in their various employments; so God giveth his people the hope of his glory to keep them close to his service, Heb. vi. 11, 12. 1 John iii. 3. And it is such a sure hope as shall never make them ashamed, Rom. vi. 5. Those that think it below the excellency of their love to work from a hope of the heavenly reward, do thereby advance their love beyond the love of the apostles and primitive saints, and even of Christ himself.

Thirdly, This perswasion of our future enjoyment of everlasting happiness, cannot tend to licentiousness, if we understand well that perfect holiness is a necessary part of that happiness; and that tho' we have a title to that happiness by free Justification and adoption, yet we must go to the possession of it in a way of holiness, 1 John iii. 1, 2, 3. Neither is it legal or mercenary to be moved by this perswasion, seeing the perswasion itself is not gotten by the works

of the law, but by free grace through faith, *Gal. v. 5*. And if it be a working from self-love; yet for certain it is not that carnal self-love, which the scripture condemneth as the mother of sinfulness, *2 Tim. iii. 2*. but an holy self-love, inclining us to prefer God above the flesh and the world, such as God directeth us unto, when he exhorteth us to save ourselves, *Acts ii. 40. 1 Tim. iv. 16*. And it is so far from being contrary to the pure love of God, that it brings us to love God more purely and entirely. The more good and beneficial we apprehend God to us to all eternity, doubtless the more lovely God will be to us, and our affections will be the more enflamed towards him. God will not be loved as a barren wilderness, a land of darkness to us, neither will he be served for nought, *Jer. ii. 31. Isa. xlv. 19*. He would think it a dishonour to him to be owned by us as our God, if he had not prepared for us a city, *Heb. xi. 16*. And he draweth us to love him by the cords of a man, such cords as the love of men useth to be drawn by, even by his own love to us, in laying his benefits before us, *Hos. xi. 4*. Therefore the way for us to keep ourselves in the love of God, is to look for his mercy unto eternal life, *Jude 21*.

The **LAST Endowment**, for the same end as the former, is, that *we be well perswadcd of sufficient strength both to will and perform our duty acceptably, until we come to the enjoyment of the heavenly happiness*. This is contrary to the error of those that account it sufficient, if we have

have strength to practise holiness, if we will, or to will it if we please; and this is the sufficient strength which they earnestly contend for, as a great benefit bestowed on all mankind by universal redemption. It is also contrary to the error of those that think the practice of godliness and wickedness to be alike easy, excepting only some difficulty in the first alterations of vicious customs, and in bearing persecutions, which they account to be a rare case, since the kingdoms of the world have been brought to the profession of christianity, or that think that God requireth of men only to do their endeavour, that is, what they can do; and it is nonsense to say they cannot do what they can do. According to their judgment, it is needless to concern ourselves much about sufficient strength for holy practice. For the confirmation of the assertion against *these* errors take *these* arguments.

First, We are by nature dead intrespases and sins, unable to will, or do any thing that is spiritually good, notwithstanding the redemption that is by Christ, until we be actually quickened by Christ, *Ephes. ii. 1. Rom viii. 7, 8, 9.* Those that are sufficiently enlightened and humbled, know themselves to be naturally in this case; and that they do not only want executive power to do good, but chiefly an heart to will it, and to be pleased with it; and that if God work not in them both to will and to do, they shall neither will nor do any thing pleasing to him, *Phil. ii. 13.* And that if he leave them to their own corruption after he hath begun the good work, they shall certainly prove vile apo-

states; and their latter end will be worse than their beginning. We may conclude from hence, that whosoever can courageously attempt the practice of the law without being well perswaded of a sufficient power whereby he may be enabled to be heartily willing, as well as to perform when he is willing, until he hath gone through the whole work of obedience acceptably, such an one was never yet truly humbled and brought to know the plague of his own heart, neither doth he truly believe the doctrine of original sin, whatever formal profession he makes of it.

Secondly, Those that think sincere conformity to the law in ordinary cases to be so very easy, shew that they neither know it nor themselves. Is it an easy thing to wrestle, not against flesh only, but *against principalities, powers, spiritual wickedness in high places*? Ephes. vi. 12. Is it an easy thing not to lust or covet according to the tenth commandment? The apostle *Paul* found it so difficult to obey this commandment, that his concupiscence prevailed the more by occasion of the commandment, *Rom. vii. 7, 8.* Our work is not only to alter vicious customs, but to mortify corrupt natural affections which bred those customs; and not only to deny the fulfilling of sinful lust, but to be full of holy love and desires; yet even the restraining the execution of corrupt lusts, and crossing them by contrary actings, is in many cases like *the cutting off a right hand, and plucking out a right eye*, Matth. v. 29, 30. If obedience be so easy, how came it to pass that the heathens generally did those things for which their own
con-

consciences condemned them as worthy of death? *Rom. i. 32.* - And many among us seek to enter into this *strait gate, and are not able;* *Luke xiii. 24.* And break so many vows and purposes of obedience, and fall back to the practice of their lusts, though in the mean time the fears of eternal damnation press hard upon their consciences?

As to those that find persecution for religion to be so rare a thing in late days, they have cause to be suspected, that they are of the world, and therefore the world loveth his own; else they would find that national profession of religion will not secure those that are truly godly from several sorts of persecutions. And suppose men do not persecute us for religion, yet there is great difficulty in bearing great injuries from men on other accounts, and losses, poverty, bodily pains, long diseases, and untimely deaths, from the ordinary providence of God, with such hearty love to God, and to injurious men for his sake, and such a patient acquiescence in his will as the law of God requireth. I acknowledge that the work of God is easy and pleasant to those whom God rightly furnisheth with endowments for it; but those that assert it to be easy to men in their common condition, shew their imprudence in contradicting the general experience of *Heathens* and *Christians*. Though many duties do not require much labour of body or mind, and might be done with ease, if we were willing, yet it is easier to remove a mountain, than to move and incline the heart to will and affect the doing of them. I need not con-

cern my self with those that account that all have sufficient strength for an holy practice, because they can do their endeavour, that is, what they can do; for God requireth actual fulfilling of his commands. What if by our endeavours we can do nothing in any measure according to the rule, shall the law be put off with no performance? And shall such endeavours be accounted sufficient holiness? And what if we cannot so much as endeavour in a right way? If man's ability were the measure of acceptable duty, the commands of the law would signify very little.

Thirdly, The wisdom of God hath ever furnished people with a good perswasion of a sufficient strength, that they might be enabled both to will and do their duty. The first *Adam* was furnished with such a strength; and we have no cause to think that he was ignorant of it, or that he needed to fear that he should be left to his own corruptions, because he had no corruptions in him, until he had produced them in himself by sinning against strength, and when he had lost that strength, he could not recover the practice of holiness, until he was acquainted with a better strength, whereby the head of satan should be bruised, *Gen. iii. 15*. Our Lord Christ doubtless knew the infinite power of his deity to enable him for all that he was to do and suffer in our nature. He knew the Lord God would help him, therefore he should not be confounded, *Isa. 1. 7*. The scripture sheweth what plentiful assurance of strength God gave to *Moses*, *Joshua*, *Gideon*, when he called them to great employments; and to the *Israelites*, when he

he called them to subdue the land of *Canaan*. Christ would have the sons of *Zebedee* to consider whether they were able to *drink of his cup*, and to *be baptized with the baptism* that he *was baptized with*, Matth. xx. 22. Paul encourageth Believers to the life of holiness, by perswading them that sin shall not prevail to get the dominion over them, because they *are not under the law, but under grace*, Rom. vi. 13, 14. And he exhorteth them to be *strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, that they *might be able to stand against the wiles of the devil*, Ephes. vi. 10, 11. John exhorteth believers *not to love the world, nor the things of the world, because they were strong, and had overcome the wicked one*, 1 John ii. 14, 15. They that were called of God heretofore to work miracles, were first acquainted with the gift of power to work them, and no wise man will attempt to do them without knowledge of the gift: Even so when men that are dead in sin are called to do the works of a holy life, which are in them great miracles, God maketh a discovery of the gift of power unto them, that he may encourage them in a rational way to such a wonderful enterprise.

D I R E C T I O N I I I .

The way to get holy endowments and qualifications necessary to frame and enable us for the immediate practice of the law, is to receive them out of the fulness of Christ, by fellowship with him; and that we may have this fellowship, we must be in Christ, and have Christ himself in us, by a mystical union with him.

E X P L I C A T I O N .

HERE, as much as any where, we have great cause to acknowledge with the apostle, that *without controversy great is the mystery of godliness*, even so great that it could not have entered into the heart of man to conceive it, if God had not made it known in the gospel by supernatural revelation. Yea, tho' it be revealed clearly in the holy scriptures, yet the natural man hath not eyes to see it there, for it is foolishness to him; and if God express it never so plainly and properly, he will think that God is speaking riddles and parables. And I doubt not but it is still a riddle and parable even to many truly godly, that have received an holy nature in this way: For the apostles themselves had the saving benefit of it before the comforter discovered it clearly to them, *John* xiv. 20. And they walked in Christ as the way to the father, before they clearly knew him to be the way, *John* xiv. 5. And the best of us know it but
in

in part, and must wait for the perfect knowledge of it in another world.

One great mystery is, that the holy frame and disposition whereby our souls are furnished and enabled for immediate practice of the law, *must be obtained by receiving it out of Christ's fulness*, as a thing already prepared and brought to an existence for us in Christ, and treasured up in him: And that as we are justified by a righteousness wrought out in Christ, and imputed to us, so we are sanctified by such an holy frame and qualifications, as are first wrought out, and compleated in Christ for us, and then imparted to us: And as our natural corruption was produced originally in the first *Adam*, and propagated from him to us; so our new nature and holiness is first produced in Christ, and derived from him to us, or as it were propagated. So that we are not at all to work together with Christ, in making or producing that holy frame in us, but only to take it to ourselves, and use it in our holy practice, as made ready to our hands. Thus we have fellowship with Christ in receiving that holy frame of spirit that was originally in him: For fellowship is when several persons have the same things in common, 1 *John* i. This Mystery is so great, that notwithstanding all the light of the gospel, we commonly think that we must get an holy frame by producing it anew in ourselves, and by forming and working it out of our own hearts. Therefore many that are seriously devout, take a great deal of pains to mortify their corrupted nature, and beget an holy frame of heart in themselves, by striving earnestly

ly to master their sinful lusts, and by pressing vehemently upon their hearts many motives to godliness, labouring importunately to squeeze good qualifications out of them, as oyl out of a flint. They account that tho' they be justified by a righteousness wrought out by Christ, yet they must be sanctified by a holiness wrought out by themselves. And tho' out of humility they are willing to call it infused grace, yet they think they must get the infusion of it by the same manner of working, as if it were wholly acquired by their endeavours. On this account they acknowledge the entrance into a godly life to be harsh and unpleasing, because it costs so much struggling with their own hearts and affections to new frame them. If they knew that this way of entrance is not only harsh and unpleasant, but altogether impossible, and that the true way of mortifying sin, and quickning themselves to holiness, is by receiving a new nature out of the fulness of Christ, and that we do no more to the production of a new nature, than of original sin, tho' we do more to the reception of it; if they knew this, they might save themselves many a bitter agony, and a great deal of mispent burdensome labour, and employ their endeavours to enter in at the strait gate, in such a way as would be more pleasant and successful.

Another great mystery in the Way of sanctification, is the glorious manner of our fellowship with Christ in receiving an holy frame of heart from him; it is by our being in Christ, and having Christ himself in us; and that not merely by his universal Presence as he is God,
but

but such a *close union* as that we are *one spirit, and one flesh with him*, which is a privilege peculiar to those that are truly sanctified. I may well call this a *mystical union*, because the Apostle calleth it a *great mystery*, in an epistle full of mysteries, *Eph. v. 22.* intimating that it is *eminently great*, above many other mysteries; it is one of the three mystical unions that are the chief mysteries in religion: The other two are the union of the *Trinity* of persons in one God-head, and the union of the divine and human natures in one person, Jesus Christ, God and Man. Though we cannot frame an exact idea of the manner of any of these three unions in our imaginations, because the depth of these mysteries is beyond our comprehension, yet we have cause to believe them all, because they are clearly revealed in scripture, and are a necessary foundation for other points of christian doctrine; particularly this union between Christ and believers, is plain in several places of scripture, affirming that Christ is, and *dwelleth in believers, and they in him*, John vi. 56. and xiv. 20. And that they are so joined together as to become one Spirit, 1 *Cor. vi. 17.* And that believers are members of Christ's body, of his Flesh, and of his Bones; and they two, Christ and the church, are *one flesh*, *Eph. v. 30, 31.* Furthermore, this union is illustrated in Scripture by various resemblances, which would be very much unlike the things which they are made use of to resemble, and would rather seem to beguile us by obscuring the truth, than instruct us by illustrating of it, if there were no true

true proper union between Christ and believers. It is resembled by the union between God the Father and Christ, *John* xiv. 20. and xvii. 21, 22, 23. between the Vine and its Branches, *John* xv. 4, 5. between the head and body, *Ephes.* i. 22, 23. between bread and the eater, *John* vi. 51, 53, 54. It is not only resembled but sealed in the Lord's supper, where neither the *Popish* transubstantiation, nor the *Lutherans* consubstantiation, nor the *Protestants* spiritual presence of Christ's body and blood to the true receivers, can stand without it; and if we can imagine that Christ's body and blood are not truly eaten and drunk by believers either spiritually or corporally, we shall make the bread and wine joined with the words of institution, not only naked signs, but such signs as are much more apt to breed false notions in us, than to establish us in the truth. And there is nothing in this union so impossible or repugnant to reason, as may force us to depart from the plain and familiar sense of those scriptures that express and illustrate it. Though Christ be in Heaven and we on earth, yet we can join our souls and bodies to his at such a distance, without any substantial change of either, by the same infinite Spirit dwelling in him and us, and so our flesh will become his, when it is quickened by his Spirit, and his flesh ours as truly as if we did eat his flesh, and drink his blood, and he will be in us himself by his Spirit, who is one with him, and who can unite more closely to Christ than any material substance can do, or who can make a more close and intimate union between
Christ

Christ und us. And it will not follow from hence that a believer is one person with Christ, any more than that Christ is one person with the Father by that greater mystical union. Neither will a believer be hereby made God, but only the *temple* of God, as Christ's body and soul is; and the spirit's lively *instrument*, rather than the principal *cause*. Neither will a believer be necessarily perfect in holiness hereby; or Christ made a sinner: For Christ knoweth how to dwell in believers by certain measures and degrees, and to make them holy so far only as he dwelleth in them. And though this union seem too high a preferment for such unworthy creatures as we are, yet considering the preciousness of the blood of God whereby we are redeemed, we should dishonour God if we should not expect a miraculous advancement to the highest dignity that creatures are capable of through the merits of that blood. Neither is there any thing in this union contrary to the judgment of sense, because the bond of the union being spiritual, falleth not at all under the judgment of sense.

Several learned men of late acknowledge no other union between Christ and believers, than such as persons or things wholly separated, may have by their *mutual relations* each to other: And accordingly they interpret the places of scripture that speak of this union. When Christ is called the head of the church, they account that a political head or governour is the thing meant: When Christ is said to be in his people, and they in him, they think that the proper

per meaning is, that Christ's law, doctrine, grace, salvation, or that godliness is in them, and embraced by them; so that Christ here must not be taken for Christ himself, but for some other thing wrought in them by Christ. When Christ and believers are said to be one spirit, and one flesh, they understand it of the agreement of their minds and affections, as if the greatness of the mystery of this union, mentioned *Ephes. v. 32.* consisted rather in a harsh trope, or a dark improper expression, than in the depth and abstruseness of the thing it self, and as if Christ and his apostles had affected obscure intricate expressions, when they speak to the church of things very plain and easy to be understood. Thus that great mystery, the *union of believers with Christ* himself, which is the *glory* of the church, and hath been highly owned formerly both by the antient fathers, and many eminent protestant divines, particularly writers concerning the doctrine of the Lord's supper, and by a very general consent of the church in many ages, is now exploded out of the new model of divinity. The reason of exploding it, as I judge in charity, is not because our late learned refiners of divinity think themselves less able to defend it than the other two mysterious unions, and to silence the objections of those proud sophisters that will not believe what they cannot comprehend; but rather because they account it to be one of the finews of *Antinomianism* that lay unobserved in the former usual doctrine; that it tendeth to puff up men with a perswasion that they are justified, and have eternal life in them

them already, and that they need not depend any longer upon their uncertain performances of the *condition of sincere obedience for salvation*, whereby they account the very foundation of a holy practice to be subverted. But the wisdom of God hath laid another manner of foundation for an holy practice than they imagine, of which *this union (which the builders refuse) is a principal stone next to the head of the corner.* And in opposition to their corrupt glosses upon the scriptures that prove it, I assert that *our union with Christ is the cause of our subjection to Christ as a political head* in all things, and of the abiding of his law, doctrine, grace, salvation, and all godliness in us, and of our agreement with him in our minds and affections, and therefore it cannot be altogether the samething with them. And this assertion is useful for a better understanding of the excellency of this union. It is not a privilege procured by *our sincere obedience and holiness*, as some may imagine, or a *reward of good works* reserved for us in another world; but it is a privilege bestowed upon believers in their very *first entrance into a holy state*, on which all ability to do good works doth depend, and all sincere obedience to the law doth follow after it as fruit produced by it.

Having thus far explained the direction, I shall now shew, that though the truth contained in it be above the reach of natural reason, yet it is evidently discovered to those that have their understandings opened, to discern that su-

pernatural revelation of the mysterious way of sanctification which God hath given to us in the holy scriptures.

First, There are several places in scripture that do plainly express it: Some texts shew that *all things pertaining to our salvation, are treasured up for us in Christ and comprehended in his fulness*; so that we must have them thence, or not at all, Col. i. 19. *it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.* And in the same epistle, Col. ii. 11, 12, 13. the apostle sheweth that the holy nature whereby we live to God, was first produced in us by his death and resurrection, *in whom also ye are circumcised in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, buried with him, quickened together with him when you were dead in your Sins.* Ephes. i. 3. *Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.* An holy frame of spirit, with all its necessary qualifications, must needs be comprehended here in all spiritual blessings, and these are given us in *Christ's person* in heavenly places, as prepared and treasured up in him for us while we are upon earth, and therefore we must have our *holy endowments* out of him, or not at all. In this text some chuse rather to read *heavenly things*, as in the margin, because neither places nor things are expressed in the original; but the former textual reading is to be preferred before the marginal, as being the proper sense of the original Greek phrase, which is, and must necessarily be so rendred in two other places of this same epistle, Chap. iii. 10. and

vi. 12. Another text is 1 Cor. i. 30. which sheweth, that *Christ is of God made unto us sanctification*, by which we are able to walk *holily*; as well as *wisdom*, by the knowledge of which we are *savingly wise*; and *righteousness*, by the imputation of which we are *justified*; and *redemption*, whereby we are redeemed from all misery, to the enjoyment of his glory, as our happiness in the heavenly kingdom. Other texts of scripture shew plainly that we receive our holiness out of his fulness by fellowship with him, *John i. 16, 17. Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace.* And it is understood of grace answerable to the law given by *Moses*, which must needs include the grace of sanctification, 1 *John i. 3, 5, 6, 7. Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. God is light; if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.* Hence we may infer, that our fellowship with God and Christ doth include particularly our having light, and walking in it holily and righteously. There are other texts that reach the proof of the whole direction fully, shewing not only that our holy endowments are made ready first in Christ for us, and received from Christ; but that we receive them by *union* with Christ, *Col. iii. 10, 11. Ye have put on the new Man, which is renewed after the image of him that created him, where Christ is all, and in all.* 1 Cor. vi. 17. *He that is joyned to the Lord is one spirit.* Gal. ii. 20. *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.* 1 *Joh. v. 11, 12. This is the*

record that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life. Can we desire that God should more clearly teach us, that all the fulness of the new man is in Christ; and all that spiritual nature and life whereby we live to God in holiness; and that they are fixed in him so inseparably, that we cannot have them except we be joined to him, and have himself abiding in us? Take heed lest through prejudice and hardness of heart, you be guilty of making God a liar in not believing this eminent record that God hath given to us of his Son.

Secondly, God is pleased to *illustrate* this mysterious manner of our sanctification by such variety of *similitudes* and resemblances, as may put us out of doubt that it is truth, and such a truth as we are highly concern'd to know and believe. I shall endeavour to contract the *chief* of these resemblances, and the force of them, briefly into *one* sentence, leaving it to those that are spiritual to enlarge their meditation upon them. We receive from Christ a *new holy frame and nature*, whereby we are enabled for an holy practice, by union and fellowship with him, in like manner, 1. As Christ lived in our nature by the Father, *Joh. vi. 57.* 2. As we receive *original sin and death* propagated to us from the *first Adam*, *Rom. v. 12, 14, 16, 17.* 3. As the natural *body* receiveth sense, motion, nourishment from the head, *Col. ii. 19.* 4. As the branch receiveth its sap, juice, and fructifying vertue from the vine, *Joh. xv. 4, 5.* 5.

As

As the *wife* bringeth forth fruit by vertue of her conjugal union with her husband, *Rom. vii. 4. 6.* As *Stones* become an holy temple by being built upon the foundation, and joined with *the chief corner-stone*, *1 Pet. ii. 4, 5, 6.* 7. As we receive the nourishing *virtue* of bread by eating it, and of wine by drinking it, *Joh. vi. 51, 55. 57.* which last resemblance is used to seal to us our communion with Christ in the Lord's Supper. Here are *seven* resemblances instanced, whereof some do illustrate the mystery spoken of more fully than others; all of them do some way intimate, that our new life and holy nature is *first* in Christ, and *then* in us, by a true proper union and fellowship with him. If any should urge that the similitudes of *Adam* and his seed, and of married couples, do make rather for a relative, than a real union betwixt Christ and us; let them consider that all nations are really made of one blood which was first in *Adam*, *Acts xvii. 26.* and that the first woman was made out of the body of *Adam*, and was really *bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh*; and by this first married couple the mystical union of Christ and his church is eminently resembled, *Gen. ii. 22, 23, 24.* with *Eph. v. 30, 31, 32.* And yet it supposeth both these resemblances in the nearness and fulness of them; because those that are joined to the Lord are not only one flesh, but one spirit with him.

Thirdly, The end of Christ's *incarnation, death and resurrection*, was to prepare and form an holy nature and frame for us in himself, to be communicated to us by union and fellowship

with him; and not to enable us to produce in ourselves the first original of such an holy nature by our own endeavours.

1. By his *incarnation* there was a man created in a new holy frame, after the holiness of the first *Adam's* frame had been marr'd and abolished by the first transgression, and this new frame was far more excellent than ever the first *Adam's* was; because man was really joined to God by a close, inseparable union of the divine and humane nature in the one person of Christ, so that these natures had communion each with other in their actings, and Christ was able to act in his humane nature, by power proper to the divine nature, wherein he was one God with the father. The words that he spake while he was upon earth, he spoke not of himself by any mere humane power, but the father that dwelt in him, he did the works, *Joh. xiv. 10.* Why was it that Christ set up the fallen nature of man in such a wonderful frame of holiness, in bringing it to live and act by communion with God living and acting in it? One great end was, that he might communicate this excellent frame to his seed that should be born of him and in him, by his spirit as the last *Adam*, the quickning spirit; that as we have born the image of the earthly man, so we might also bear the image of the heavenly, *1 Cor. xv. 45, 49.* in holiness here and in glory hereafter. Thus he was born *Emanuel* God with us, because the fullness of the Godhead with all holiness did first dwell in him bodily, even in his humane nature, that we might be filled up with that fulness in him,
Matth.

Matth. i. 23. Col. ii. 9, 10. Thus he came down from heaven as living bread, that as he liveth by the father, so those that eat him may live by him, *Joh. vi. 51, 56.* by the same life of God in them that was first in him.

2. By his *death* he freed himself from the guilt of our sins imputed to him, and from all that innocent weakness of his human nature, which he had born for a time for our sakes. And by freeing himself he prepared a freedom for us from our whole natural condition, which is both weak as he was, and also polluted with our guilt and sinful corruption. Thus the corrupt natural state, which is called in Scripture the *Old Man*, was crucified together with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed. And it is destroyed in us, not by any wounds that we ourselves can give to it, but by our partaking of that freedom from it, and death unto it, that is already wrought out for us by the death of Christ, as is signified by our Baptism wherein we are buried with Christ by the application of his death to us, *Rom. vi. 2, 3, 4, 10, 11.* God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, for sin, (or by a sacrifice for sin, as in the margin) condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us that walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit, *Rom. viii. 3, 4.* Observe here, that though Christ died that we might be justified by the righteousness of God and of faith, not by our own righteousness which is of the law, *Rom. x. 4, 5, 6. Phil. iii. 9.* yet he died also that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, and

that by walking after his spirit, as those that are in Christ, *Rom. viii.* He is resembled in his death to a corn of wheat dying in the earth, that it may propagate its own nature, by bringing forth much fruit, *John xii. 24.* To the passover that was slain, that a feast might be kept upon it: And to bread broken, that it may be nourishment to those that eat it, *1 Cor. v. 7, 8,* and *xi. 24.* To the Rock smitten that water may gush out of it for us to drink, *1 Cor. x. 4.* He died that he might make of Jew and Gentile one new man in himself, *Eph. ii. 15.* and that he might see his seed, *Isa. liii. 10.* such as derive their holy nature from him, *Isa. liii. 10.* Let these scriptures be well observed, and they will sufficiently evidence that Christ died, not that we might be able to form an holy nature in our selves, but that we might receive one ready prepared and formed in Christ for us by union and fellowship with him.

3. By his *Resurrection* he took possession of spiritual life for us, as now fully procured for us, and made to be our right and property, by the merit of his death, and therefore we are said to be quickned together with Christ, even when we were dead in sins, and to be raised up together, yea and to be made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus as our head, while we continue upon earth in our own persons, *Eph. ii. 5, 6.* His resurrection was our resurrection to the life of holiness, as *Adam's* fall was our fall into spiritual death; and we are not ourselves the first makers and formers of our new holy nature any more than of our original corrup-

tion,

tion, but both are formed ready for us to partake of them. And by union with Christ we partake of that spiritual life that he took possession of for us at his resurrection, and thereby we are enabled to bring forth the fruits of it, as the scripture sheweth by the similitude of a marriage union, *Rom. vii. 4.* We are married to him that is risen from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God. Baptism signifieth the application of Christ's resurrection to us as well as his death; we are raised up with him in it to newness of life, as well as buried with him, and we are taught thereby that because he died unto sin once and liveth unto God, we should likewise reckon our selves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Rom. vi. 4, 5, 10, 11.*

Fourthly, Our sanctification is by the Holy Ghost, by whom we live and walk holily, *Rom. xv. 16. Gal. v. 25.* Now the Holy Ghost first rested on Christ in all fulness, that he might be communicated from him to us, as was signified to *John* the Baptist by the similitude of the descending of a dove from the opened heavens resting on Christ at his baptism, *John i. 32, 33.* And when he sanctifieth us he baptizeth us into Christ, and joineth us to Christ by himself, as the great bond of union, *1 Cor. xii. 13.* So that according to the scriptural phrase, it is all one to have Christ himself and to have the spirit of Christ in us, *Rom. viii. 9, 10.* He glorifieth Christ, for he receiveth those things that are Christ's, and sheweth them to us, *John xvi. 14, 15,* He giveth us an experimental knowledge of

of those spiritual blessings which he himself prepared for us by the *incarnation, death and resurrection* of Christ.

Fifthly, The effectual causes of these four principal endowments, which in the foregoing direction were asserted as necessary to furnish us for the immediate practice of holiness, are comprehended in the fulness of Christ, and treasured up for us in him; and the endowments themselves, together with their causes, are attained richly by union and fellowship with Christ. If we be joined to Christ, our hearts will be no longer left under the power of sinful inclinations, or in a mere indifferency of inclination to good or evil, but they will be powerfully endued, with a power, bent, and propensity to the practice of holiness by the spirit of Christ dwelling in us, and inclining us to mind spiritual things, and to lust against the flesh, *Rom. viii. 1, 4, 5. Gal. v. 17.* And we have in Christ a full reconciliation with God, and an advancement into higher favour with him than the first *Adam* had in the state of innocency, because the righteousness that Christ wrought out for us by his obedience unto death, is imputed to us for our justification, which is called the righteousness of God, because it was wrought by one that is God as well as Man, and therefore it is of infinite value to satisfy the justice of God for all our sins, and to procure his pardon and highest favour for us, *2 Cor. v. 21. Rom. v. 19.* And that we may be persuaded of this reconciliation, we receive the spirit of adoption through Christ, *whereby we cry Abba Father, Rom. viii. 15.* Hereby also we are per-

perswaded of our future enjoyment of the everlasting happiness, and of sufficient strength both to will and to perform our duty acceptably, until we come to that enjoyment. For the spirit of adoption teacheth us to conclude, that if we be the children of God, then we are heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ; and that the law of the spirit of life that is in Christ Jesus, maketh us free from the law of sin and death, and that nothing shall be against us, nothing shall separate us from the love of God in Christ, but in all opposition and difficulties that we meet with, we shall be at last *more than conquerors through him that loved us*, Rom. viii. 17, 23, 35, 37, 39. Furthermore this comfortable perswasion of our justification and future happiness, and all saving privilege, *cannot tend to licentiousness*, as it is given only in this way of union with Christ, because it is joined inseparably with the gift of sanctification, by the spirit of Christ; so that we cannot have justification, or any saving privilege in Christ, except we receive Christ himself, and his holiness, as well as any other benefit, as the scripture testifieth that *there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit*, Rom. viii. 1.

Sixthly, Whereas it may be doubted, whether the saints that lived before the coming of Christ in the flesh, could possibly be one flesh with him, and receive a new nature by union and fellowship with him, as prepared for them in his fullness, we are to know that the same Christ that took our flesh was before *Abraham*, John viii.

58. and was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world; to be sacrificed as a Lamb without blemish, that he might redeem us from all iniquity by his precious blood, 1 *Pet.* i. 18, 19, 20. and he had the same spirit then, which filled his human nature with all its fulness afterwards, and raised it from the dead, and he gave that spirit then to the church, 1 *Pet.* i. 11. and iii. 18, 19. Now this spirit was able and effectual to unite those saints to that flesh which Christ was to take to himself in the fulness of time, because he was the same in both, and to give out to them that grace with which Christ would afterwards fill his flesh for their salvation, as well as ours. Therefore *David* accounted Christ's flesh to be his, and spake of Christ's death and resurrection, as his own, before hand, as fully as any of us can do since their accomplishment. *Psal.* xvi. 9, 10, 11. *My flesh also shall rest in hope, for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption, thou wilt shew me the path of life.* Yea, and saints before *David's* time, did all eat of the same spiritual meat, and drink of the same spiritual drink, even of the same Christ as we do, and therefore were partakers of the same privilege of union and fellowship with Christ, 1 *Cor.* x. 3, 4. And when Christ was manifested in the flesh, in the fulness of time, all things in heaven and on earth, all the saints departed whose spirits were then made perfect in heaven, as well as the saints that then were, or should afterward be on earth, were gathered together in one, and comprehended in Christ as
their

their head, Ephes. i. 10. And he was the chief Corner-stone in whom the building of the whole Church upon the foundation of the Prophets before, and the Apostles after his coming, being fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord, Ephes. ii. 20, 21. Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, and to day, and for ever, Heb, xiii. 8. His incarnation, death, and resurrection were the cause of all the holiness that ever was, or shall be given to man, from the fall of Adam to the end of the world, and that by the mighty power of his spirit, whereby all saints that ever were or shall be, are joined together, to be members of that one mystical body whereof he is the head.

D I R E C T I O N. IV.

The means or instruments whereby the spirit of God accomplisheth our union with Christ, and our fellowship with him in all holiness, are, the Gospel whereby Christ entereth into our hearts to work faith in us, and faith whereby we actually receive Christ himself with all his fulness, into our hearts. And this faith is a Grace of the Spirit, whereby we heartily believe the Gospel, and also believe on Christ, as he is revealed and freely promised to us therein, for all his salvation.

E X P L I C A T I O N.

THAT which I asserted in the foregoing direction, concerning the necessity of our being in Christ, and having Christ in us, by a my-

myſtical union, to enable us for an holy practice, might put us to a ſtand in our endeavours for holineſs, becauſe we cannot imagine how we ſhould be able to raiſe our ſelves above our natural ſphere, to this glorious union and fellowſhip, until God be pleaſed to make known to us, by ſupernatural revelation, the means whereby his ſpirit maketh us partakers of ſo high a privilege. But God is pleaſed to help us at a ſtand to go on forward, by revealing *two Means* or *Inſtruments*, whereby his ſpirit accompliſheth the myſtical union and fellowſhip between Chriſt and us, and whereby rational creatures are capable of attaining thereunto, by his ſpirit working in them.

One of theſe means is the *Gospel of the Grace of God*, wherein God doth make known to us the *unſearchable riches of Chriſt*, and *Chriſt in us the Hope of Glory*, Eph. iii. 8. Col. i. 27. and doth alſo invite us, and command us to believe on Chriſt for his ſalvation, and doth encourage us by a free promiſe of that ſalvation, to *all that believe on him*, Acts xvi. 13. Rom. x. 9, 11. This is God's own inſtrument of conveyance, wherein he ſendeth Chriſt to us to bleſs us with his *Salvation*, Acts iii. 26. It is the *miniſtration of the ſpirit and of righteouſneſs*, 2 Cor. iii. 6, 8, 9. *Faith cometh by the hearing of it*, and therefore it is a great inſtrument whereby we are begotten in Chriſt, and Chriſt is formed in us, Rom. x. 16, 17. 1 Cor. iv. 15. Gal. iv. 19. There is no need for us to ſay in our hearts, *Who ſhall aſcend into heaven to bring Chriſt down from above? Or who ſhall*

descend into the deep, to bring up Christ from the dead, that we may be united, and have fellowship with him in his Death and Resurrection? For the Word is nigh to us, the Gospel, the Word of Faith, in which Christ himself graciously condescendeth to be nigh to us; so that we may come at him there, without going any further, if we desire to be joined to him, Rom. x. 6, 7, 8.

The other of these means is *Faith*, that is wrought in us by the gospel: This is our *Instrument of Reception*, whereby the union between Christ and us is accomplished on our part by our actual receiving Christ himself, with all his fullness, into our hearts; which is the principal subject of the present explanation.

The faith which philosophers commonly treat of, is only an *habit* of the understanding, whereby we assent to a testimony upon the authority of the testifier: Accordingly some would have faith in Christ to be no more than a believing the truth of things in religion, upon the authority of Christ testifying them; but the apostle sheweth that the faith whereby we are justified, is faith in Christ's blood, Rom. iii. 24, 25. not only in his authority as a *Testifier*. And tho' a mere assent to a testimony were sufficient faith for knowledge of things, which the philosophers aimed at, yet we are to consider, that the design of saving faith is not only to know the truth of Christ and his salvation, testified and promised in the gospel, but also to apprehend and receive Christ and his salvation, as given by and with the promise. Therefore saying

ving faith must necessarily contain two acts, *believing the Truth of the Gospel*, and *believing on Christ*, as promised freely to us in the gospel for all salvation. By the one it receiveth *the means* wherein Christ is conveyed to us; by the other it *receiveth Christ himself* and his salvation in the means. As 'tis one act to receive the breast or cup wherein milk or wine are conveyed, and another act to suck the milk in the breast, and to drink the wine in the cup, and both these acts must be perform'd heartily with an unfeigned love to the truth; and a desire of Christ and his salvation above all things; this is our spiritual appetite, which is necessary for our eating and drinking Christ, the food of life, as a natural appetite is for bodily nourishment. Our assenting unto, or believing the gospel, must not be forced by mere conviction of the truth, such as wicked men and devils may be brought to, when they had rather it were false: Neither must our believing on Christ be only constrained for fear of damnation, without any hearty love and desire towards the enjoyment of him, but we must receive the love of the truth, by relishing the goodness and excellency of it; and *we must account all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, and count them but dung, that we may win Christ and be found in him*, 2 Thes. ii. 10. Phil. iii. 8. 9. esteeming Christ to be *all our salvation and happiness*, Col. iii. 11. *in whom all fulness doth dwell*, Col. i. 19. And this love must be to every part of Christ's salvation, to holiness as well as forgiveness of sins. We must desire

desire earnestly, that God would create in us a clean heart, and right spirit, as well as hide his face from our sins, Psal. li. 9. 10. not like many that care for nothing in Christ but only deliverance from hell. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled; Mat. v. 6. The former of these acts doth not immediately unite us to Christ, because it is terminated only on the means of conveyance, the gospel, yet it is a saving act, if it be rightly performed, because it enclineth and dispoeth the soul to the latter act, whereby Christ himself is immediately received into the heart. He that believeth the gospel with hearty love and liking, as the most excellent truth, will certainly with the like heartiness believe on Christ for his salvation. They that know the name of the Lord, will certainly put their trust in him, Psal. ix. 10. Therefore in scripture, saving faith is sometimes described by the former of these acts, as if it were a mere believing the gospel; sometimes by the latter, as a believing on Christ or in Christ. Rom. x. 9. If thou believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. Verse 11. the scripture saith, whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. 1 John v. 1. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. Ver. 13. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

For the better understanding of the nature of faith, let it be further observed, that the se-

cond and principal act of it, *believing on Christ*, includeth believing on God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, because they are one and the same infinite God, and they all concur in our salvation by Christ, as the only mediator between God and us, *in whom all the promises of God are Yea and Amen.* 2 Cor. i. 20. *By him, as mediator, we believe on God that raised him from the dead, and gave him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God,* 1 Pet. i. 21. And it is the same thing with trusting on God or on the Lord, which is so highly commended in the whole scripture, especially in the Old Testament, as may easily appear by considering that it hath the same causes, effects, objects, adjuncts, opposites, and all the same circumstances, excepting only that it had a respect to Christ as promised, before his coming, and now it respecteth him, as already come in the flesh. Believing in the Lord and trusting on his salvation, are equivalent terms, that explain one another, *Psal. lxxviii. 22.* I confess, that trusting on things seen or known by the mere light of reason, as on our own wisdom, power, riches, on princes, or any arm of flesh, may not so properly be called believing on them: But trusting on a Saviour, as discovered by a testimony is properly believing on him. It is also the same thing that is expressed by the terms of *resting, relying, leaning, staying* our selves on the Lord, called *hoping* in the Lord, because it is the ground of that expectation which is the proper act of *hope*, though our believing and trusting be for the present as well as future benefit of
this

this salvation. The reason why it is so commonly expressed in the scriptures of the new testament, by the terms of *believing on Christ*, might be probably because when that part of scripture was written, there was cause in a special manner to urge believing the testimony that was then newly revealed by the *gospel*.

Having thus explained the *nature* of faith, I come now to assert its proper *use* and *office* in our salvation, that *it is the means and instrument whereby we receive Christ, and all his fulness, actually into our hearts*. This excellent use and office of faith is encountered by a multitude of errors: Men naturally esteem, that it is too small and slight a thing to produce so great effects; as *Naaman* thought washing in *Jordan* too small a matter for the cure of his leprosy. They contemn the true means of entering in at the strait gate, because they seem too easy for such purpose, and thereby they make the entrance not only difficult, but impossible to themselves. Some will allow, that faith is the *sole condition of our justification, and the instrument to receive it*, according to the doctrine maintained formerly by the protestants against the papists; but they account, that it is not sufficient or effectual to *sanctification*, but that rather tendeth to *licentiousness*, if it be not joined with some other means, that may be powerful and effectual to secure an holy practice. They commend this great doctrine of protestants as a comfortable cordial for persons upon their death beds, or in agonies under terrors of conscience, but they account, that it is not good for ordinary

ordinary food, and that it is wisdom in ministers to preach it seldom and sparingly, and not without some antidote or corrective to prevent the licentiousness to which it tendeth. Their common antidote or corrective is, that sanctification is necessary to salvation as well as justification, and that though we be justified by faith, yet we are sanctified by our own performance of the law; and so they set up salvation by works, and make the grace of justification to be of none effect, and not at all comfortable. If it had indeed such a malignant influence upon practice, it could not be owned as a doctrine proceeding from the most holy God, and all the comfort that it affords must needs be ungrounded and deceitful. This consequence is well understood by some late refiners of the protestant religion, and therefore they have thought fit to new model this doctrine, and to make saving faith to be only a *condition to procure a right and title to our justification by the righteousness of Christ*, which must be performed before we can lay any good claim to the enjoyment of it, and before we have any right to use any instrument for the actual receiving of it; and this they call an accepting of, or receiving Christ. And that they may the better secure the practice of holiness by their conditional faith, they will not have *trusting on God or Christ for salvation*, to be accounted the principal saving act of it; because as it seemeth to them, many loose wicked people trust on God and Christ for their salvation, as much as others, and are by their confidence hardened the more in their wickedness: But they had rather

it should be *obedience to all Christ's laws*, at least in *resolution*; or a *consent that Christ should be their Lord*, accepting of his terms of *salvation*, and a *resignation of themselves to his government in all things*. It is a sign that the scripture form of teaching is grown into *disesteem* with our great masters of reason, when trusting in the lord, so much commended in scripture, is accounted a mean and ordinary thing. They endeavour to affright us from owning faith to be an instrument of justification, by telling us, that thereby we that use the instrument are made our own principal justifiers, to the dishonour of God; though it might be easily answered, that we are made thereby only the principal receivers of our own justification from God, the giver of it, to whom all the glory doth belong.

All these errors will fall, if it can be proved, that such a faith as I have described is an instrument whereby we actually receive Christ himself into our hearts, and holiness of heart and life, as well as justification by union and fellowship with him. For the proof of it, I shall offer the following arguments.

First, By faith we have the actual enjoyment and possession of Christ himself, and not only of remission of sins, but of life, and so of holiness: *Christ dwelleth in our hearts by faith*, Ephes. iii. 17. We live to God, and yet not we, but *Christ liveth in us by the faith of the son of God*, Gal. ii. 19, 20. *He that believeth on the son of God, hath the son and everlasting life that is in him*, 1 John v. 12. 13. John iii. 36. *He that*

heareth Christ's word, and believeth on him that sent Christ, hath everlasting life, and is passed from death unto life, John v. 24. These texts express clearly such a faith as I have described; therefore the efficiency or operation of faith, in order to the enjoyment of Christ and his fulness, cannot be the procurement of a bare right or title to this enjoyment, but rather it must be an entrance into it, and taking possession of it. *We have our access and entrance by faith into that grace of Christ wherein we stand, Rom. v. 2.*

Secondly, The scripture plainly ascribeth this effect to faith, that by it we receive Christ, put him on, are rooted and grounded in him, and also that we receive the spirit, Remission of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified, John i. 12. Gal. iii. 26, 27. Col. ii. 6, 7. Gal. iii. 14. Acts xxvi. 18. And the scripture illustrateth this receiving by the similitude of eating and drinking; *He that believeth on Christ, and drinketh the living water of his spirit, John vii. 37, 38, 39. Christ is the bread of life, his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed; and the way to eat and drink it, is to believe in Christ, and by so doing we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us, and have everlasting life. John vi. 35, 47, 48, 54, 55, 56.* How can it be taught more clearly, that we receive Christ himself properly into our souls by faith, as we do receive food into our bodies by eating and drinking, and that Christ is as truly united to us thereby as our food when we eat or drink it? So that faith cannot be a condition to
procure

procure a mere right or title to Christ, no more than eating or drinking procureth a mere right or title to our food, but it is rather *an instrument* to receive it, as the mouth that eateth and drinketh the food.

Thirdly, Christ with all his salvation is freely given by the grace of God to all that believe on him; *for we are saved by grace through faith, and that not of our selves, it is the gift of God*, Eph. ii. 8, 9. *We are justified freely by his grace through faith in his blood*, Rom. iii. 24, 25. The Holy Ghost, who is the bond of union between Christ and us, is a gift, *Acts* ii. 38. Now that which is a gift of grace must not at all be earned, purchased, or procured by any work or works performed as a condition to get a right or title to it; and therefore faith it self must not be accounted such a conditional work. If it be by grace, it is no more of works, *otherwise grace is no more grace*, Rom. xi. 6. The condition of a free gift is only, *Take and have*; and in this sense we will readily acknowledge faith to be a condition, allowing a liberty in terms where we agree in the thing; but if you give a pepper-corn to purchase a title to it, then you spoil the freeness of the gift. The *free offer* of Christ to you is sufficient to confer upon you a right, yea to make it your duty to receive Christ and his salvation as yours; and because we receive Christ by faith as a free gift, therefore we may account faith to be the instrument, and as it were the hand whereby we receive him.

Fourthly, It hath been already proved, that all spiritual life and holiness is treasured up in

the fulness of Christ, and communicated to us by union with him; therefore the accomplishing of union with Christ is the first work of saving grace in our hearts; and faith it self, being an holy grace, and part of spiritual life, cannot be in us before the beginning of it, but rather it is given to us, and wrought in the very working of the union; and the way wherein it conduceth to the union, cannot be by procuring a mere title to Christ as a condition, because then it should be performed before the uniting work beginneth: But rather by being an instrument, whereby we may actively receive and embrace Christ, who is already come into the soul to take possession of it as his own habitation.

Fifthly, True saving faith, such as I have described, hath in its nature and manner of operation a peculiar aptitude or fitness to receive Christ and his salvation, and to unite our souls unto him, and to furnish the soul with a new holy nature, and to bring forth an holy practice by union and fellowship with him. God hath fitted natural instruments for their office, as the hands, feet, &c. so that we may know by their nature and natural manner of operation, for what use they are designed. In like manner we may know, that faith is an instrument formed on purpose for our union with Christ, and sanctification, if we consider what a peculiar fitness it hath for the work. The discovery of this is of great use for the understanding of the mysterious manner of our receiving and practising all holiness by union and fellowship with Christ, by this precious grace of faith. And to make you as
it

it were to see with your eyes, that it is such an instrument as I have asserted it to be, I shall present it to your view in three particulars.

1st, The grace of faith is as well fitted for the souls receiving Christ and union with him, as any instrument of the body is for receiving and closing with things needful for it. By the very act of hearty trusting or believing on Christ for all salvation and happiness, the soul casteth and putteth away from itself every thing that keepeth it at a distance from Christ, as all confidence in our strength, endeavours, works, privileges, or in any worldly pleasures, profits, honours, or in any human helps and succours for our happiness and salvation. Because such confidences are inconsistent with our confidence in Christ for all salvation. Paul by his confidence in Christ was taken off from all confidence in the flesh; he suffered the loss of glorying in his privileges and legal righteousness, and counted all other enjoyments in matters of the world or of religion, to be but dung, that he might win Christ, and be found in him, *Phil. iii. 3, 6, 7, 8, 9*. The voice of faith is, *Assur shall not save us, neither will we ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, ye are our God; for in thee the fatherless find mercy, Hos. xiv. 3. We have no might against this great company of our spiritual enemies; neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee, 2 Chron. xx. 12.* I might multiply places of scripture to shew what a self emptying grace faith is, and how it casteth other confidences out of the soul, by getting above them to Christ,

Christ, as the only happiness and salvation. The same act of trusting or believing on Christ, or on God, is the very manner of our souls coming to Christ, *John vi. 35. drawing near to the Lord, Psal. lxxiii. 28. fleeing unto the Lord to hide us, Psal. cxliii. 9. making our refuge in the shadow of his wings, Psal. lvii. 1. staying our selves and our minds upon the Lord. Isa. l. xo. and xxvi. 3. laying hold of eternal life, 1 Tim. vi. 12. lifting up ourselves to the Lord, Psal. xxv. 1. rolling our way, and casting our burden upon the Lord, Psal. xxxvii. 5. and lv. 22. and of our eating and drinking Christ, as hath already appeared. Let us consider, that Christ and his salvation cannot be seen, or handled, or attained to by any bodily motion, but are revealed and promised to us in the word. Now let any invent if they can, any way for the soul to exercise any motion or activeness, in receiving of this unseen promised salvation, besides believing the word, and trusting on Christ for the benefit promised. If Christ were to be earned by works, or any other kind of conditional faith, yet a faith must be instrumental to receive him. Some think love as fit to be the uniting grace, but I have shewed that love to Christ's salvation is an ingredient into faith: And though love be an appetite unto union, yet we have no other likely way to fill this appetite, while we are in this world, besides trust on Christ for all his benefits as he is promised in the gospel.*

2dly, There is in this saving faith a natural tendency, to furnish the soul with an holy frame and nature, and all endowments necessary thereunto,

unto, out of the fulness of Christ. An hearty affectionate trusting on Christ for all his salvation, as freely promised to us, hath naturally enough in it to work in our souls a rational bent, and inclination to, and ability for the practice of all holiness, because it comprehendeth in it *a trusting that through Christ we are dead to sin and alive to God, and that our old man is crucified*, Rom. vi. 2, 6, 4. and that *we live by the spirit*, Gal. v. 25. and that *we have forgiveness of sin*; and that *God is our God*, Psal. xxxi. 14. and that *we have in the Lord righteousness and strength, whereby we are able to do all things*, Isa. xlv. 24. Phil. iv. 13. and that *we shall be gloriously happy in the enjoyment of Christ to all eternity*, Phil. iii. 20, 21. When the saints in scripture speak so highly of such glorious spiritual privileges as I have here named, they acquaint us with the familiar sense and language of their faith, trusting on God and Christ, and they give us but an explication of the nature and contents of it; and they speak of nothing more than what they receive out of the fulness of Christ. And how can we otherwise judge, but that those that have an hearty love to Christ, and can upon a good ground think and speak such high things concerning themselves, must needs be heartily disposed and mightily strengthened for the practice of holiness?

3dly, Because faith hath such a natural tendency to dispose and strengthen the soul for the practice of holiness, we have cause to judge it a meet instrument to accomplish every part of that practice in an acceptable manner. Those that
with

with a due affection believe stedfastly on Christ, for the free gift of all his salvation, may find by experience, that they are carried forth by that faith, according to the measure of its strength or weakness, to love God heartily, because God hath loved them first; *1 John* iv. 19. to praise him, to pray unto him in the name of Christ, *Ephes.* v. 20. *John* xvi. 26, 27. to be patient with cheerfulness under all afflictions, giving thanks to the father, that hath called them to his heavenly inheritance, *Col.* i. 11, 12. to love all the children of God, out of love to their heavenly father, *1 John* v. 1. to walk as Christ walked, *1 John* ii. 6. and to give themselves up to live to Christ in all things, as constrained by his love in dying for them, *2 Cor.* v. 14. We have a cloud of witnesses concerning the excellent works that were produced by faith, *Heb.* xi. And though trusting on Christ be accounted such a slight and contemptible thing, yet I know no work of obedience which it is not able to produce. And note the excellent manner of working by faith; by it we live and act in all good works, as people in Christ, as raised above our selves and our natural state, by partaking of him and his salvation; and we do all in his name and on his account. This is the practice of that mysterious manner of living to God in holiness, which is peculiar to the Christian religion, wherein we live; and yet not we, but Christ liveth in us, *Gal.* ii. 20. And who can imagine any other way but this for such a practice, while Christ and his salvation is known to us only by the gospel?

The

The explanation that I have made of the nature and office of true faith, and of its aptitude for its office, is sufficient to evidence, that it is *a most holy faith*, as it is called *Jude 20.* and that such a trusting on Christ, as I have described, in its own nature cannot have any tendency to *licentiousness*, but only to holiness; and that it rooteth and groundeth us in holiness more than the mere accepting of any terms of salvation, and consenting to have Christ for our Lord can do, and is more powerful to secure an holy practice, than any of those resolutions of obedience or *resignating acts*, that some would have to be the great conditions of our salvation, which are indeed *no better than hypocritical acts*, if they be not produc'd by *this faith*. There is indeed a counterfeit dead faith, such as wicked men may have, and if that tend to licentiousness, let not true faith be blamed, but rather mark the description of it which I have given, that you may not be deceived with a counterfeit faith instead of it.

I shall add something concerning the *efficient cause* of this excellent grace, and of our union with Christ by it, whereby it may appear, that it is not so slight and easy a way of salvation as some may imagine. The author and finisher of our faith and of our union and fellowship with Christ by faith, is no less than the *infinite spirit of God*, and *God and Christ himself by the spirit*; for, *by one spirit we are all baptized into one body of Christ*, and *are all made to drink into one spirit*, 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13. *God granteth us, according to the riches of his glory,*

to be strengthened with all might by his spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith, Ephes. iii. 16, 17. If we do but consider the great effect of faith, that by it we are raised to live above our natural condition, by Christ and his spirit living in us, we cannot rationally conceive that it should be within the power of nature to do any thing that advanceth us so high. If God had done no more for us in our sanctification, than to restore us to our first natural holiness, yet this could not have been done without putting forth his own almighty power to quicken those that are dead in sin. How much more is this almighty power needful to advance us to this wonderful new kind of frame, wherein we live and act above all the power of nature; by an higher principle of life than was given to *Adam* in innocency, even by Christ and his spirit, living and acting in us? The natural man bringeth forth his offspring according to his image, by that natural power of multiplying, with which God blessed him at his first creation; but the second *Adam* bringeth forth his offspring new born, according to his image only by the spirit, *John* iii. 5. *As many as receive him, even those that believe on his name, are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, John* i. 12, 13. Christ took his own human nature into personal union with himself, in the womb of the virgin *Mary* by the Holy Ghost coming upon her, and the power of the highest overshadowing her, the same power whereby the world was created, *Luke* i. 35. So he taketh

eth us into mystical union and fellowship with himself, by no less than an infinite creating power, for we are the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, Ephes. ii. 10. And if any man be in Christ he is a new creature, 2 Cor. v. 17.

For the accomplishing this great work of our new creation in Christ, the spirit of God doth first work upon our hearts by and with the gospel, to produce in us the grace of faith; for if the gospel should come to us in word only and not in power and in the Holy Ghost, Paul might labour to plant, and Apollos to water, without any success, because we cannot receive the things of the spirit of God; yea, we shall account them foolishness, until the spirit of God enable us to discern them; 1 Thess. i. 5. 1 Cor. iii. 6. and ii. 14. We shall never come to Christ by any teaching of man, except we also bear and learn of the father, and be drawn to Christ by his spirit, John vi. 44, 45. And when saving-faith is wrought in us, the same spirit giveth us fast hold of Christ by it: As he openeth the mouth of faith to receive Christ, so he filleth it with Christ; or else the acting of faith would be like a dream of one that thinketh he eateth and drinketh, and when he awaketh he findeth himself empty. The same spirit of God did both give that faith whereby miracles were wrought, and did work also the miracles by it: So also the same spirit of Christ doth work saving-faith in us, and doth answer the aim and end of that faith, by giving us union and fellowship with Christ by it: So that none of

of the glory of this work belongeth to faith, but but only to Christ and his spirit. And indeed, faith is of such an humble self-denying nature, that it ascribeth nothing that it receiveth, to itself, but all to the grace of God; and therefore God saveth us by faith, that all the glory may be ascribed to his free-grace, *Rom. iv. 16.* If *Adam* had strength enough in innocency to perform the duty of faith as well as we, yet it will not follow, that he had strength enough to raise himself above his natural state, into union with Christ, because faith doth not unite us to Christ by its own virtue, but by the power of the spirit working by it and with it. Thus are we *first passive and then active* in this great work of mystical union; we are *first apprehended of Christ*, and then we *apprehend Christ*; Christ entereth first into the soul, to join himself to it, by giving it the *spirit of faith*, and so the soul receiveth Christ and his spirit by their own power. As the sun first enlightheth our eyes, and then we can see it by its own light. We may note further, to the glory of the grace of God, that his union is fully accomplished by Christ, giving the spirit of faith to us, even before we act that faith in the reception of him, because by this grace or spirit of faith the soul is inclined and disposed to an active receiving of Christ. And, no doubt, Christ is thus united to many infants, who have the spirit of faith, and yet cannot act faith, because they are not come to the use of their understandings; but those of riper years, that are joined passively to Christ by the spirit of faith, will also join themselves with him

him actively, by the act of faith, and until they act this faith, they cannot know or enjoy their union with Christ, and the comfort of it, or make use of it, in acting any other duties of holiness acceptably in this life.

DIRECTION V.

We cannot attain to the practice of true holiness by any of our endeavours while we continue in our natural state, and are not Partakers of a new State by union and fellowship with Christ through Faith.

EXPLICATION.

IT is evident all have not that precious faith, whereby Christ dwelleth in our hearts, yea, the number of those that have it is small, comparatively to the whole world that lieth in wickedness, *1 John v. 19, 20.* and many of those that at length attain unto it, do continue without it for some considerable time, *Ephes. ii. 12.* And though some may have the spirit of faith given to them from their mother's womb, (as *John the Baptist, Luke i. 15, 44.*) yet even in them there is a natural being by generation, before there can be a spiritual being by regeneration, *5 Cor. 15. 46.* Hence ariseth the consideration of two states or conditions of the children of men, in matters that appertain to God and godliness, the one of which is vastly different from the other. Those that have the happiness of a new birth and creation in Christ by faith are thereby

F

placed in a very excellent State, consisting in the enjoyment of the righteousness of Christ, for their justification, and of the spirit of Christ to live by, in holiness here, and glory for ever, as hath already appeared. Those that are not in Christ by Faith, cannot be in a better state than that which they received together with their Nature from the first *Adam*, by being once born and created in him, or than they can attain to by the power of that nature, with any such help as God is pleased to afford to it. This latter I call a *natural* state, because it consisteth in such things as we have either received by natural generation, or can attain to by natural power through divine assistance; as the scripture calleth man in this state the *natural man*, 1 Cor. ii. 14. The former I call a *new* state, because we enter into it by a new birth in Christ; and I may call it a *spiritual* state, according to the scripture, because it is received from Christ the quickning spirit, and the natural and spiritual man are opposed, 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15. tho' some call both these states *spiritual*, because the everlasting weal or woe of the soul or spirit of man, is chiefly concerned in them.

It is a common error of those that are in a corrupt natural state, that they seek to reform their lives according to the Law, without any thoughts that their state must be changed before their lives can be changed from sin to righteousness. The heathen that knew nothing of a new state in Christ, were urged by their own consciences to practise several duties of the law

law according to the knowledge they had by the light of nature, *Rom. ii. 14, 15.* *Israel* according to the flesh, had a zeal of God and Godliness, and endeavoured to practise the written law, at least in external performances, while they were enemies to the faith of Christ; and *Paul* attained so far, that he was blameless in these external performances of the righteousness of the law, while he persecuted the church of Christ, *Phil. iii. 6.* Some are so near the kingdom of God, while they continue in a natural state, that they are convinced of the spirituality of the law, that it bindeth us principally to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and to love our neighbour as our selves, and to perform universal obedience to God, in all our inward thoughts and affections as well as in all our outward actions, and to do all the duties that we owe to our neighbour, out of this hearty love, *Mark xii. 33, 34.* And they struggle and labour with great earnestness to subdue their inward thoughts and affections to the law of God, and to abstain not only from some sins, but from all known sins, and to perform every known duty of the law, with their whole heart and soul, as they think, and are so active and intent in their devout practice, that they overwork their natural strength; and so fervent in their zeal, that they are ready even to kill their bodies with fastings and other macerations, that they may kill their sinful lusts. They are strongly convinced, that holiness is absolutely necessary to salvation, and deeply affected with the terrors of damnation:

And yet they were never so much enlightned in the mystery of the gospel, as to know that a new state in Christ is necessary to a new life, therefore they labour in vain to reform their natural state, instead of getting above it in Christ. And some of these, when they have mispent many years in striving against the stream of their lusts without any success, do at last fall miserably into despair of ever attaining to holiness, and turn to wallowing in the mire of their lusts, or are fearfully swallowed up with horreur of conscience. There are several false opinions whereby such ignorant zealots encourage themselves in their fruitless endeavours. Some of them judge that they are able to practise holiness, because they are not compelled to sin, and may abstain from it if they will. To this they add, That Christ by the merit of his death, hath restored that freedom of will to good, which was lost by the fall, and hath set nature upon its legs again, and that if they endeavour to do what lieth in them, Christ will do the rest, by assisting them with the supplies of his saving grace; so they trust upon the grace of Christ to help them in their endeavours. They plead further, that it would not consist with the justice of God to punish them for sin, if they could not avoid it, and that it would be in vain for the ministers of the gospel to preach to them, and exhort them to any saving duty, if they cannot perform it. They produce examples of heathens, and of such as had the name of christians, without any acquaintance with the faith that I have described, who have attained to a great

great excellency in religious words and works.

My work at present is, to deliver those ignorant zealots from their fruitless tormenting labours, by bringing them to despair of the attainment of holiness in a natural state, that they may seek it only in a new state by faith in Christ, where they may certainly find it without such tormenting labour and anxiety of spirit. For this end I shall confirm the truth asserted in the direction, and fortifie it against the formentioned false opinions by the ensuing considerations.

First, The foundation of this assertion is firmly laid in the directions already explained, and confirmed by many places of scripture: For if all endowments necessary to enable us for an holy practice, be to be had only in a state of union and fellowship with Christ by faith, and faith it self not by the natural power of free-will, but by the power of Christ, coming into the soul by his spirit, to unite us with himself; who seeth not that the attainment of true holiness by any of our most vigorous endeavours, while we continue in our natural condition, is altogether hopeless? I need add no more, were it not to shew more fully what abundance of light the scripture affordeth to guide us aright in this part of our way, that those who wander out of it, by following any false light of their own, or others corrupted judgments, may find themselves the more inexcusable.

F 3

Secondly,

Secondly, It is evident that we cannot practise true holiness, while we continue in a natural state, because we must be *born again of water and of the Spirit*, or else we cannot enter into the kingdom of God, John iii. 3, 5. And we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them, Eph. ii. 10. If we could love God and our neighbour as the law requireth, without a new-birth and creation, we might live without them; for Christ hath said, *This do and thou shalt live*, Luke x. 28. Now a new birth and creation, is more than a mere reforming and repairing our natural state. If we were put into a certain state and condition by the first birth and creation, much more by the second: For the first produceth the substance of a man as well as a state; the second hath nothing to produce, but a new state of the same person. And note, that we were first created and born in *Adam* the natural man, but our new birth and creation is in Christ the spiritual man; and if any man be in Christ he is in a new state, far different from the state of *Adam* before the fall, he is wholly a new creature, as it is written, *old things are past away, behold all things are become new*, 2 Cor. v. 17.

Thirdly, It is positively asserted by the apostle Paul, that *those that are in the flesh cannot please God*, Rom. viii. 8. Many are too overly and negligent in considering the sense of this gospel phrase, what it is to be *in the flesh*. They understand no more by it than to be sinful, or to be addicted inordinately to please the

sen-

sensitive appetite. They should consider that the apostle speaketh here of *being in the flesh*, as the cause of sinfulness, as in the next verse, he speaketh of *being in the spirit*, as the cause of holiness ; and whatever cause it be, it must needs be distinct from its effect. Sin is a property of the flesh, or something that dwelleth in the flesh, *Rom. vii. 18.* and therefore it is not the Flesh it self. The flesh is that which *lusteth against the spirit*, *Gal. v. 17.* and therefore it is not merely sinful lusting. The true interpretation, is, That by *Flesh* is meant the nature of man, as it is corrupted by the fall of *Adam*, and propagated from him to us, in that corrupt State by natural generation ; and to *be in the flesh*, is to be in a natural state ; as to *be in the spirit*, is to be in a new state, by the *spirit of Christ dwelling in us*, *Rom. viii. 9.* The corrupt nature is called *Flesh*, because it is received by carnal generation, and the new nature is called *Spirit*, because it is received by spiritual regeneration. *That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit*, *John iii. 6.* So the apostle, if he be rightly understood, hath said enough to make us despair utterly of attaining to true holiness, while we continue in a natural state.

Fourthly, The apostle testifieth that those that *have been taught as the Truth is in Jesus*, have learned to avoid the former sinful conversation, by *putting off the old-man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts ; and by putting on the new-man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness*, *Ephes.*

iv. 21, 22, 24. Putting off the old-man, and putting on the new-man, is the same thing with not being in the flesh but in the spirit, in the foregoing testimony, that is, putting off our natural state, and putting on a new state, by union and fellowship with Christ. The apostle himself sheweth, that by the new man is meant that excellent state where *Christ is all and in all*, Col. iii. 11. Therefore by the old-man, must needs be meant the natural state of man, wherein he is without the saving enjoyment of Christ, which is called *Old*, because of the new state to which believers are brought by their regeneration in Christ. This is a manner of expression peculiar to the gospel as well as the former, and as slightly considered by those that think that the apostle's meaning is only that they should put off sinfulness, and put on holiness in their conversation, and so they think to become new men, by turning over a new leaf in their practice, and leading a new life. Let them learn here, that the old and new man, are two contrary states, containing in them not only sin and holiness, but all other things that dispose and incline us to the practice of them; and that the old-man must be put off, as crucified with Christ, before we can be freed from the practice of sin, Rom. vi. 6, 7. And therefore we cannot lead a new life, until we have first gotten a new state by faith in Christ. Let me add here, that the meaning of the apostle is the same, Rom. xiii. 12, 13, 14. where he directeth us to *put on the Lord Jesus Christ, as the means whereby we may cast off the deeds of darkness, and*
walk

walk honestly as in the day time, not fulfilling the lusts of the flesh.

Fifthly, Our natural state hath several properties that wholly disable us for the practice of holiness and enslave us to the practice of sin, while we continue in it. Here I shall shew, the old-man, the flesh, or natural state, is not only sin, as some would have it, but it containeth in it several things which I shall name, that make it to be sinful, besides several other things that make it miserable. I have shewed that in Christ we have all endowments necessary to frame us for godliness; so in our fleshly state, we have all things contrary to that holy frame. One thing belonging to our natural state, is the guilt of sin, even of *Adam's* first sin, and of the sinful depravation of our nature, and of all our own actual transgressions, and therefore we are *by nature the children of wrath*, Ephes. ii. 3. under the curse of God. The benefit of remission of our sins and freedom from condemnation, is not given to us in the flesh, or in a natural state, but only in Christ, Rom. viii. 1. Ephes. i. 7. And can we imagine that a man should be able to prevail against sin, while God is against him and curseth him? Another property inseparable from the former, is an *evil conscience*, which denounceth the wrath of God against us for sin, and inclineth us to abhor him as our enemy, rather than to love him, as hath been shewed; or if it be a *blind conscience*, it hardneth us the more in our sins. A third property is an *evil inclination* tending only to sin, which therefore is called *Sin that dwelleth in*

in us, and the law of sin in our members that powerfully subdueth and captivateth us to the service of sin, Rom. vii. 20, 23. It is a fixed propensity to lust against the law without any deliberation, and therefore its lustings are not to be prevented by any diligence or watchfulness. The mind of the flesh is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, Rom. viii. 7. How vain then is it to plead that they can do good if they will, when their minds and will-itself is enslaved to sin. A fourth property is subjection to the power of the devil, who is the God of this World, that hath blinded the minds of all that believe not, 2 Cor. iv. 4. and will certainly conquer all whom he fighteth with upon his own dunghill, that is, in a natural state. And from all these properties we may well conclude that our natural state hath the property never to be good, to be stark dead in sin, Ephes. ii. 1. according to the sentence denounced against the first sin of mankind in Adam, in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die, Gen. ii. 17. For you can no more bring it to holiness by any the most vehement motives and endeavours, than you can bring a dead carcase to life, by chaffing and rubbing it. You can stir up no strength or fortifying grace in the natural man by such motives and endeavours, because there is no strength in him to be stirred up, Rom. v. 6. Tho' you do all that lieth in you to the utmost, while you are in this flesh you can do nothing but sin; for there is no good thing in you, as the Apostle Paul sheweth by his own experience, I know that in me,
(that

(that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing, Rom. vii. 18.

Sixthly, We have no good ground to trust on Christ, *to help us to will or to do that* which is acceptable to him, while we continue in our natural state, or to imagine that freedom of will to holiness, is restored to us by the merit of his death. For as it hath been already shewed, Christ aimed at an higher end in his incarnation, death and resurrection, than the restoring the decay and ruins of our natural state: He aimed to advance us to a new state more excellent than the state of nature ever was, by union and fellowship with himself, that we might live to God, not by the power of a natural free-will, but by the power of his spirit living and acting in us. So we may conclude that our natural state is irrecoverable and desperate, because Christ the only Saviour did not aim at the recovery of it. It is neither holy nor happy, but subject to sin, and to all miseries as long as it remaineth. Even those that are in a new state in Christ, and do serve the law of God with their mind, do yet with their flesh serve the law of sin, *Rom. vii. 25.* As far as it remaineth in them it *lusteth against the spirit, Gal. v. 17.* And it *remaineth dead because of sin, even when the spirit is life to them because of righteousness, Rom. viii. 19.* And must be wholly abolished by death before we can be perfected in that holiness and happiness that is by faith in Christ. After God had promised salvation by Christ the seed of the woman, he placed cherubims and a flaming sword to keep man out of paradise, thereby

teach.

teaching him that his first state was lost without hope, and that the happiness intended for him was wholly new. Our old natural man was not revived and reformed by the death of Christ, but crucified together with him, and therefore to be abolished and destroyed out of us by virtue of his death, *Rom. vi. 6.* It is like the part of a garment infected with the plague of leprosie, which was to be rent off as incurable, that the garment might be clean, *Levit. xiii. 56.* *If Christ be not in us we are reprobates.* 2 *Cor. xiii. 5. i. e.* we are in a state which God hath rejected from partaking of his salvation, so that we are not to expect any assistance from God to make us holy in it, but rather to deliver us from it.

Seventhly, This doth not at all discharge those that are in a natural state from obligation to holiness of life, nor render them excusable for their sins, at the tribunal of God's justice. *For God hath made man upright, but they sought out many inventions,* *Eccles vii. 29.* Observe well the words of this text, and you will find that all they who have sought out many inventions, rather than upright walking, are comprehended in man that was at first made upright. And man in the text signifieth all mankind, the first *Adam* was all mankind, as *Jacob and Esau were two nations in the womb of Rebecca,* *Gen. xxv. 23.* God made us all in our first parent according to his own image, able and inclined to do his law, and in that pure nature our obligation to obedience was first laid upon us, and the first wilful transgression, whereby our first parent bereaved himself of the image

mage of God, and brought upon himself the sentence of death, was our sin as well as his, for in one man Adam, all have sinned, and so death is passed upon all, Rom. v. 12. Because all mankind were in Adam's loins, when the first sin was committed, even as *Levi* may be said to have paid tithes in *Abraham* before he was born, because when his father *Abraham* paid tithes to *Melchizedek*, he was yet in his loins, Heb. vii. 9, 10. That promise of God that he will not charge the iniquities of parents upon their children, is a promise belonging to the new covenant confirmed in the blood of Christ, and it is Yea and Amen to us only in Christ, in whom we have another nature than that which our parents conveyed to us, so that we cannot justly claim the benefit of it in our old natural state, Jer. xxxi. 29, 30, 31. and 2 Cor. i. 20. Those that account their impotency a sufficient plea to excuse them or others, shew that they were never truly humbled for that great wilful transgression of all mankind in the loins of *Adam*. Inability to pay debts excuseth not a debtor that hath lavished away his estate; neither doth drunkenness excuse the mad actings of a drunkard, but rather aggravates his sin. And our impotency consisteth not in a mere want of an executive power, but in the want of a willing mind to practise true holiness and righteousness. Naturally we love it not, we like it not, but lusterh against it, Gal. v. 17. and hate the light, John iii. 20. If men in a natural state had a hearty love and liking to true holiness, and a desire and serious endeavour to practise it out of

of hearty love, and yet failed in the event, then they might under some pretence plead for their excuse (as some do for them) that they were compelled to sin by an inevitable fate. But none have just cause to plead any such thing for their excuse, because none endeavour to practise true holiness out of hearty love to it, until the good work be begun in their souls; and when God hath begun, he will perfect it, *Phil. i. 6.* and will in the mean time accept their ready mind, though they fall short in performance, *2 Cor. viii. 12.* *How abominable then and filthy is man that drinketh iniquity as water,* *Job xv. 16.* That cannot practise holiness, because he will not; this is their just condemnation, *that they love darkness rather than light;* they deserve to be partakers with the devils in torments, as they partake with them in evil lusts, and their inability to do good will no more excuse them, than it excuseth the devils.

Eightly, Neither will this assertion make it a vain thing to preach the gospel to natural people, and to exhort them to true repentance and faith in Christ, for their conversion and salvation. For the design of our preaching is not to bring them to holiness in their natural state, but to raise them above it, and to present them *perfect in Christ,* in the performance of those duties, *Col. i. 28.* And though they cannot perform those duties by their natural strength, yet the gospel is made effectual for their conversion and salvation, by the power of the Holy Ghost which accompanieth the preaching of it, to quicken those that are dead in sin, and to create them

them anew in Christ, by giving to them repentance unto life, and a lively faith in Christ. The gospel cometh to the elect of God, not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in such assurance, that they receive it with joy of the Holy Ghost, 1 Theff. i. 5, 6. The gospel is the ministration of the spirit that giveth life, 2 Cor. iii. 6, 8. It is mighty through God, 2 Cor. x. 4. It dependeth not at all upon the power of our free-will to make it successful for our conversion; but it conveyeth into the soul that life and power, whereby we receive and obey it; Christ can make those that are dead in sin to *hear his voice and live*, John v. 25. Therefore he can speak to them by his gospel, and command them to repent and believe with good success, as well as he could say to dead carcases, *Talitha cumi*, Mark v. 41. *Lazarus come forth*, John xi. 43, 44; And to the sick of the palsy, *Arise, take up thy bed and go unto thine house*, Matth. ix. 6.

Ninthly, There is no reason that the examples of heathen philosophers, or any *Jews* or christians by outward profession, that have lived without the saving knowledge of God in Christ, should move us by their wise sayings and renowned attainments in the practice of devotion and morality, to recede from this truth that hath been so fully confirmed out of the holy scriptures. Have we not cause to judge that the apostle *Paul*, while he was a zealous Pharisee, and at least some few of the great multitude of the *Jews* in his time, that were zealous of the law, and had the instruction of the holy scriptures

tures, attained as near to that true holiness, as the heathen philosophers, or any others in their natural state. Yet *Paul*, after he was enlightened with the saving knowledge of Christ, judged himself the *chief of sinners*, in his highest former attainments, tho' in the judgment of others he was blameless touching the righteousness which is in the law, and he found it necessary to begin to live to God in a new way by faith in Christ, and to suffer the *loss of all* his former attainments, *and to count them but dung that he might win Christ*, 1 Tim. i. 15. Phil. iii. 6, 7, 8.

And none of the great multitude of *Jews* that followed after the law of righteousness, did ever attain unto it, *while they sought it not by faith in Christ*, Rom. ix. 31, 32. What performances are greater in outward appearance, than for a man to give all his goods to the poor, and to give his body to be burnt? And yet the scripture alloweth us to suppose that this may be done without *true charity*, and therefore without any *true holiness of the heart and life*, 1 Cor. xiii. 3. Men in a natural state may have strong convictions of the infinite power, wisdom, justice and goodness of God, and of the judgment to come, and the everlasting happiness of the godly, and torments of the wicked; and these convictions may stir them up, not only to make an high profession, and to utter rare sayings concerning God and godliness, but also to labour with great earnestness to avoid all known sin, to subdue their lusts, to perform universal obedience to God in all known duties, and to serve him

him with their lives and estates to the utmost, and to extort out of their hearts some kind of love to God and godliness, that if possible they may escape the terrible torments of hell, and procure everlasting happiness by their endeavours; yet all their love to God is but forced and feigned, they have no hearty liking to God or his service, they account him an hard master, and his commandments grievous, and they repine and fret inwardly at the burden of them, and were it not for fear of everlasting fire, they would little regard the enjoyment of God in heaven, and they would be glad if they might have the liberty to enjoy their lusts without danger of damnation. The highest preferment of those that are born only after the flesh in *Abraham's* family, is but to *be children of the bond woman*, Gal. iv. 23. And though they toil more in God's service than many of his dear children; yet God accepteth not their service, because their best performances are slavish, without any childlike affections towards God, and no better than glittering sins: And yet these natural men are not at all beholden to the goodness of their natures for these counterfeit shews of holiness, or for the least abstaining from the grossest sin. If God should leave men fully to their own natural corruptions, and to the power of satan (as they deserve) all shew of religion and morality would be quickly banished out of the world, and we should grow past feeling in wickedness, and like to the *Canibals*, who are as good by nature as our selves. But God that can restrain the burning of the fiery furnace with-

out quenching it, and the flowing of water without changing its nature, doth also restrain the working of natural corruption without mortifying it, and through the greatness of his wisdom and power, he *maketh his enemies to yield feigned obedience to him*, Psal. lxvi. 3. and to do many things good for the matter of them, though they can do nothing in a right holy manner. He hath appointed several means to restrain our corruptions, as the law, terrors of conscience, terrible judgments, and rewards in this life, magistrates, human laws, labour for necessities, as food and raiment; and those gospel means, that are effectual for sanctification, serve also for restraint of sin. God hath gracious ends in this restraint of sin, that his church may be preserved, and his gospel preached in the world, and that these natural men may be in a better capacity to receive the instructions of the gospel, and that such of them that are chosen, may, in due time, be converted, and that those of them that are not truly converted may enjoy more of the goodness of God here, and suffer the less torments hereafter. As vile and wicked as the world is, we have cause to praise, and to magnify the free goodness of God that it is no worse.

DIRECTION VI.

Those that endeavour to perform sincere obedience to all the commands of Christ, as the condition whereby they are to procure for themselves a right and title to salvation, and a good ground to trust on him for the same, do seek their salvation by the works of the law, and not by the faith of Christ, as he is revealed in the gospel: And they shall never be able to perform sincerely any true holy obedience by all such endeavours.

EXPLICATION.

FOR the understanding the terms of this direction, note here, that I take salvation as comprehending justification, as well as other saving benefits; and sincere obedience, as comprehending holy resolutions, as well as the fulfilling of them. The most of men, that have any sense of religion, are prone to imagine, that the sure way to establish the practice of *holiness* and *righteousness*, is to make it the procuring condition of the favour of God, and all happiness. This may appear by the various false religions that have prevailed most in the world. In this way the heathens were brought to their best devotion and morality, by the knowledge of the judgment of God, that those that violate several of the great duties to God and their neighbour, are worthy of death; and, by their consciences accusing or excusing them, according to the practice of them, *Rom. i. 32. and ii. 14, 15.* Our

consciences are informed, by the common light of natural reason, that it is just with God to require us to perform these duties, that we may avoid his wrath, and enjoy his favour; and we cannot find any better way than this, to obtain happiness, or to stir up our selves to duty without divine revelation. Yet because our own consciences testify, that we often fail in the performance of these duties, we are inclined by self-love to perswade our selves, that our sincere endeavours to do the best we can, shall be sufficient to procure the favour of God, and pardon for all our *failings*. Thus we see, that the perswasion of salvation, by the condition of sincere obedience, hath its original from our corrupt natural reason, and is part of the wisdom of this world; it is none of the wisdom of God in a mystery, that hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world to our glory; it is none of those things of the spirit of God, which have not entered into the heart of man, and which the natural man cannot receive, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned, 2 Cor. ii. 6, 7, 9, 14. It is none of the foolishness of preaching, whereby it pleased God to save them that believe, 1 Cor. i. 21. And though we have a better way revealed to us in the gospel, for the enjoyment of the favour of God, and holiness it self, and all salvation, without any procuring condition of works, by the free gift of God's grace through faith in Christ; yet it is very difficult to perswade men out of a way they are naturally addicted to, and that hath forestalled and captivat-

ed their judgments, and is bred in their bone, and therefore cannot easily be gotten out of the flesh. Most of those that live under the hearing and profession of the gospel, are not brought to hate sin as sin, and to love godliness for it self, though they be convinced of the necessity of it to salvation, and therefore they cannot love it heartily. The only means they can take to bring themselves to it, is to stir up themselves to an hypocritical practice in their old natural way, that they may avoid hell, and get heaven by their works. And their own consciences witness, that the zeal and love that they have for God and godliness, their self-denial, sorrow for sin, strictness of life, are in a manner forced and extorted from them by slavish fear, and mercenary hope; so that they are afraid, that if they should trust on Christ, for salvation by free-grace without works, the fire of their zeal and devotion would be quickly extinguished, and they should grow careless in religion, and let loose the reins to their lusts, and bring certain damnation upon themselves. This moveth them to account them the only *Boanerges* and powerful preachers that preach little or none of the doctrine of free grace, but rather spend their pains in rebuking sin and urging people to get Christ and his salvation by their works, and thundering hell and damnation against sinners. It hath been farther observed, that some that have contended much for salvation by free grace, without any condition of works, have fallen into *Antinomian* opinions and licentious practices. The experience of these things hath much prevailed with

Some learned and zealous men of late amongst ourselves, to recede from the doctrine of justification by faith, without works, formerly professed unanimously, and strongly defended by protestants, against the papists, as a principal article of true religion. They have perswaded themselves, that such a way of justification is ineffectual, yea, destructive to sanctification; and that the practice of sincere obedience cannot be establish'd against *Antinomian* dotages and prevailing lusts, except it be made the necessary condition of our justification, and so of our eternal salvation. Therefore they conclude, that God hath certainly made sincere obedience to be the condition of our salvation. And they have endeavoured to new-model the protestant doctrine, and to interpret the holy scriptures in a way agreeable and subservient to this their only sure foundation of holiness.

But I hope to shew, that this their imagined sure Foundation of holiness was never laid by the holy God, but that it is rather an error in the foundation, pernicious to the true faith, and to holiness of life. I account it an error especially to be abhorred and detested, because we are so prone to be seduced by it, and because it is an error whereby satan transforming himself into an angel of light, and a patron of holiness, hath greatly withstood the gospel in the apostles times, and stirred up men to persecute it, out of zeal for the law, and hath since prevailed to set up and maintain popery, whereby the mystery of iniquity worketh apace in these days, to corrupt the purity of the gospel

pel among protestants, and to heal the deadly wound that was given to popery by preaching the doctrine of justification by faith without works.

One thing asserted in the direction against this fundamental error, is, that it is *a way of salvation by the works of the law*, and not by the faith of Christ, as revealed in the gospel. Though the maintainers of it would have us believe, that it is the only way of the gospel, that so we may not doubt of its power and efficacy for our justification, sanctification, and our whole salvation. Their reasons are, because the Law, as a covenant of works, requireth us to do all its commandments perfectly, that we may live; whereas they plead only for a milder condition of sincere doing, that we may live. And they plead not for doing duties, as obliged thereunto by the authority of the law given of God by *Moses*, but only in obedience to the commands of Christ in the gospel. Neither do *they* plead for salvation by sincere obedience without Christ, but only by Christ, and through his merit and righteousness; and they acknowledge, that both salvation it self, and sincere obedience, are given to them freely, by the grace of Christ, so that all is of grace. They acknowledge also, that their salvation is by faith, because sincere obedience is wrought in them by believing the gospel, and is included in the nature of that faith, which is the entire condition of our salvation: And some call it the resignating act of faith. But all these reasons are but a fallacious vizard upon a legal way,

way of salvation, to make it look like pure gospel; as I shall evince by the following particulars.

First, All that seek salvation by the sincere performance of good works, as the procuring condition, are condemned by the apostle *Paul*, for seeking righteousness by the works of the law, and not by faith, *Rom. ix. 32.* and for seeking to be justified by the law, and falling from the grace of Christ, *Gal. v. 4.* This *one Assertion*, if it can be proved, is enough to pluck off the fallacious vizard from the condition of sincere obedience, and to make men abhor it as a damning legal doctrine, that bereaveth its followers of all salvation by Christ. And the proof of it is not difficult to persons that warily consider a point of so great moment for their salvation. The *Jews* and *Judaizing christians*, against whom the apostle chiefly disputeth in this whole controvertie, did not profess any hope of being justified by perfect obedience, according to the rigor of the law, but only by such obedience as they accounted to be sincere, and not hypocritical. And we have no cause to doubt, but that the judaizing *Galatians* had learned by the gospel to distinguish sincere obedience from hypocrisie. The Jewish religion bound all that professed it, to acknowledge themselves to be sinners, as appeareth by their anniversary humiliation on the day of attonement, and several other rites of the law, and many clear testimonies in the oracles of God, that were committed to them, *Psal. cxliii. 2. Prov. x. 9. Eccles. vii. 20.* Yet they knew they were bound to turn to the Lord with all their hearts, in sincerity and uprightness, and that God would

accept of sincere obedience; for which cause they might better put it for the condition of the law, than we can of the gospel, *Psal* li. 6, 10. *Deut.* vi. 5. *Deut.* xxx. 10. So that if the apostle had disputed against those that held only perfect obedience to be the condition of justification, he had contended with his own shadow. And they might as readily judge sincere obedience to be the condition of justification under the law, as we can judge it to be the condition under the gospel. Neither doth the apostle condemn them merely for accounting sincere obedience to the law as given by *Moses*, to be the condition of their justification, but more generally for seeking salvation by their own works. And he alledgeth against them, That *Abraham* who lived before the law of *Moses*, was not justified by any of his works, tho' he did perform sincere Obedience; and that *David*, who lived under the law of *Moses*, was not justified by his works, tho' he performed sincere Obedience, and was as much bound to obey the law given by *Moses*, as we are to obey any commands of Christ in the Gospel, *Rom.* iv. 2, 3, 5, 6. Neither doth he condemn them for seeking their salvation only by works, without respecting at all the grace and salvation that is by Christ; for the judaizing *Galatians* were yet professors of the grace and salvation of Christ, tho' they thought obedience to the law a necessary condition for the partaking of it, as also many other judaizing believers did: And doubtless they accounted themselves obliged thereunto, not only by the Authority of *Moses*, but of Christ

Christ also, whom they owned as their Lord and Saviour. And we may be sure it was no damning error, to account *Moses's* Law obliging at that time; for many thousands of the *Jews*, that were sound believers, held the ceremonies of *Moses* to be in force at that time, and *Paul* was tender towards them in it, *Acts* xxi. 20, 26. *Acts* xv. 5. And other *Jews* sought justification not only by their sincere works, but also by trusting on the promise made to *Abraham*, and on their priesthood and sacrifices, which were types of Christ. And the most legal *Pharisees* would thank God for their good works, as proceeding from his grace, *Luke* xviii. 11. And they could as well acknowledge their salvation to be by faith, as the asserters of salvation by sincere obedience can in these days; for they accounted, that their sincere obedience was wrought in them by believing the word of God, which contained gospel as well as legal doctrine in it; and therefore that it must be included in the nature of faith, if faith were taken for the condition of their whole salvation. Let the asserters of the condition of sincere obedience learn from hence, that they are building again that Judaism which the apostle *Paul* destroyed, whereby the *Jews* stumbled at Christ, *Rom.* ix. 32. and the *Galatians* were in danger of falling from Christ and grace, *Gal.* v. 2, 4. And let them beware of falling under that curse which he hath denounced on this very Occasion against any man or angel, that shall preach any other gospel than that which he hath preached, *Gal.* i. 8, 9.

Secondly, The difference between the law and gospel doth not all consist in this, that the one requireth perfect doing, the other only sincere doing; but in this, that the one requireth doing, the other no doing, but believing for life and salvation. Their terms are different not only in degree, but in their whole nature.

The apostle *Paul* opposeth the believing required in the gospel to all doing for life, as the condition proper to the law, *Gal. iii. 12.* The law is not of faith, but the man that doth them shall live in them. *Rom. iv. 5. To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.* If we seek salvation by never so easie and mild a condition of works, we do thereby bring our selves under the terms of the law, and do become debtors to fulfil the whole law in perfection, tho' we intended to engage our selves only to fulfil it in part, *Gal. v. 3.* for the law is a complete declaration of the only terms whereby God will judge all that are not brought to despair of procuring salvation by any of their own works. and to receive it as a gift freely given to them by the *grace of God in Christ.* So that all that seek salvation right or wrong, knowingly or ignorantly, by any works, less or more, whether invented by their own superstition, or commanded by God in the old or new testament, shall at last stand or fall, according to those terms.

Thirdly, Sincere obedience cannot be performed to all the commands of Christ in the gospel, except it be also performed to the moral law;

law; as given by *Moses*, and as obliging us by that authority. Some asserters of the condition of salvation by the sincere obedience to the commands of Christ would fain be free from the authority of the law of *Moses*, because that justifieth none, but thundereth out a curse against all those that seek salvation by the works of it, *Gal. iii. 10, 11.* But if they were at all justified by sincere works, their respect to *Moses* authority would not hinder their success, for many that were good christians accounted themselves bound to obey not only the moral but the ceremonial law; and if they had sought justification by any works, they would have sought it by those, *Acts xx. 20, 21.* They knew not of any justification by sincere works, as commanded only in the gospel; yet if they had erred in any thing absolutely necessary to salvation, the apostles would not have tolerated their weakness. And whether they will or no, they must seek their salvation by the works of the moral law, as given by *Moses*, or else they can never get it by sincere obedience to the commands of Christ; Christ never loved their new condition so well as to abolish the *Mosaical* authority of the moral law, for the establishment of it; he came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil them in the practice required by them; and hath declared, that those that break one of the least of these commandments, and teach men so, *shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: But whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven, Mat. v. 17, 19.* He commandeth us, to do to men whatsoever we would

would they should do to us, because this is the law and the prophets; which is sufficient to prove, that he would have us to account the law authoritative to oblige us in this matter. He requireth his disciples to observe and do whatsoever the scribes and pharisees bid them, because they sat in *Moses's* seat, *Matth. xxiii. 23.*

And to come to the point in hand when Christ had occasion to answer the questions of those that were guilty of the same error that I am now dealing with, in seeking salvation by their own works, he shewed them that they must obey the commands as they were already established by the *Mosaical* authority in the scripture of the Old Testament? *What is written in the law? How readeest thou? This do and thou shalt live, Luke x. 26. If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments; which are, thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, &c.*

In like manner the apostles of Christ urged the performance of moral duties upon believers, by the authority of the law given by *Moses*. The apostle *Paul* exhorteth to love one another, because he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law, *Rom. xiii. 8.* and to honour our father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise, *Ephes. vi. 2.* The apostle *John* exhorteth to love others as no new, but an old commandment. The apostle *James* exhorteth to fulfil the royal law, according to the scripture, *thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self, and to keep all the commandments of the law, one as well as another, because he that said, do not commit adultery, said also do not kill, Jam. ii. 8, 10, 11.* Sound protestants have accounted

accounted the denial of the authority of the moral law of *Moses* to be an *Antinomian* error, and tho' our late prevaricators against *Antinomianism* maintain not this error, yet they establish a worse error, justification by their sincere gospel-works. I think the denomination of the *Antinomians* arose from this error. The law of *Moses* had its authority at first from Christ, for Christ was the Lord God of *Israel*, that ordained the law by angels on mount *Sinai*, in the hand of *Moses*, a mediator for the *Israelites*, who were then his only church, and with whom we believing Gentiles are now joined, as fellow-members of one and the same body, *Eph.* iii. 6. And tho' Christ hath since abrogated some of the commandments then given by *Moses*, concerning figurative ceremonies and judicial proceedings, yet he hath not annulled the obligative authority of the moral law, but hath left it in its full force, to oblige us in moral duties, that are still to be practised; as when some acts of any Parliament are repealed, the authority of the same parliament remaineth inviolable in other acts that are not repealed. I know they object, that the ten commandments of the moral law, the ministration of death, written and engraven on stones, are also done away by Christ, *2 Cor.* iii. 7. but this maketh altogether against their conditional covenant; for they are the ministration of death, and done away, not as they commanded perfect obedience, for even Christ himself commandeth us to be perfect, *Mat.* v. 48. but as they were conditions for procuring life and avoiding death, established by a promise of life

to the doers, and a curse to the breakers of them
Gal. iii. 10, 12. The covenant made with *Israel*
on mount *Sinai*, is abolished by Christ the me-
diator of the new covenant, *Heb. viii. 8, 9, 13.* And
the ten commandments bind us not as they were
words of that covenant, *Exod. xxxiv. 28.* I mean,
they bind us not as conditions of that covenant,
except we seek to be justified by works; for the
law, as a covenant, doth still stand in force e-
nough to curse those that seek salvation by their
own works, *Gal. iii. 10.* and if abolished, it is
only to those that are in Christ by faith, *Gal.*
ii. 19, 20. and *Acts xv. 10, 11.* But the ten
commandments bind us still, as they were then
given to a people that were at that time under
the covenant of grace made with *Abraham*, to
shew them what duties are holy, just, and good,
well pleasing to God, and to be a rule for their
conversation. The result of all is, that we must
still practise moral duties, as commanded by
Moses, but we must not seek to be justified by
our practice, if we use them as a rule of life,
not as conditions of justification, they can be
no ministration of death, or killing letter unto
us; their perfection indeed maketh them to be
harder terms to procure life by, but a better
rule to discover all imperfections, and to guide
us to that perfection which we should aim at.
And it will be our wisdom not to part with the
authority of the decalogue of *Moses*, until our
new divines can furnish us with another system
of morality as complete as that, and as excel-
lently composed and ordered by the wisdom of
God, and more authentick than it is.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Those that endeavour to procure Christ's salvation by their sincere obedience to all the commands of Christ, do act contrary to that way of salvation by *Christ, free grace, and faith*, discovered in the gospel, tho' they own it in profession never so highly.

First, They act contrary to the way of salvation by *Christ*; for they would heal themselves, and save themselves from the power and pollution of sin, and procure God's favour, by performing sincere obedience before they are come to Christ the only physician and Saviour. They lay their own obedience lowest in the foundation of their salvation, and build the enjoyment of Christ upon it, who ought to be the only foundation. They would sanctifie themselves before they have a sure interest in Christ; and going about to establish their own righteousness they do not submit themselves to the righteousness of God in Christ, *Rom. x. 3, 4*. Sometimes they will call the righteousness of Christ, their legal righteousness, that they may make room for an evangelical righteousness of their own works, to be the immediate procuring cause of their justification by Christ; whereas the apostle Paul knew no evangelical righteousness, but that of Christ, which he calleth *the righteousness of faith without the law*, *Rom. iii. 21, 22. and not of the law*, *Phil. iii. 9*. Thus they make void Christ's salvation, while they pretend to own it, and Christ profiteth them nothing, *Christ is become of none effect to them*, while they would be justified by the law, *Gal. v. 2, 4*. If we would be saved by Christ, we must

must own our selves dead, lost sinners, that can have no righteousness for justification but his, no life or ability to do good, until God bring us to union and fellowship with him.

2dly, They do also act contrary to salvation by *Grace*, according to the true meaning of the gospel. For we are not saved by grace, as the supreme cause of salvation by the intervention of works given and accepted by grace as the procuring cause, in which sense we might be saved by grace, tho' by a covenant of works. As a servant that hath monies given him by his master to purchase an annuity of his master at a low rate, may profess that he had an annuity given him freely, and yet that he hath purchased it, and may claim it as a due debt. But we are saved by grace, as the *immediate* and *complete* cause of our *whole* salvation, excluding procurement of our salvation, by the condition of works, and claiming it by any law as a due debt. The scripture teacheth us, that there is a perfect opposition and utter irreconcilableness between salvation by grace and works: *If by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then it is no more of grace, otherwise work is no more work*, Rom. xi. 6. So also there is an opposition between a *reward* reckoned of *grace*, and of *debt*, Rom. iv. 4. between a promise of happiness *by the law*, and *by grace*, Rom. iv. 13, 16. God is so jealous of the glory of his free-grace, that he will not ave us by any works, tho' of his own working in us, lest any Man should boast, Ephes. ii. 9. He knoweth, when he healeth men by physick,

or maintaineth them by the labour of their hands, they are prone to attribute the glory, rather to the means they use, than to his sole bounty and goodness.

3dly, They do also act contrary to the way of salvation by *faith*: For, as I have shewed already, the faith which is required for our salvation in the gospel, is to be understood in a sense contrary to doing good works as a condition to procure our salvation, that so the true difference between the terms of the Law and of the gospel may be maintain'd. Believing is opposed to all working for salvation, and the law of works to the law of faith, *Rom. iv. 5.* and *iii. 27.* *Eph. ii. 8, 9.* Therefore we must not here consider faith as a work of righteousness, as comprehending any works of righteousness performed or done as a condition to procure a right and title to Christ, as the hand whereby we work to earn him as our bread and drink, as our wages, but only as the hand whereby we receive Christ as freely given to us, or as the mouth whereby we eat and drink it, as hath been proved. God giveth a sufficient right to receive Christ and his salvation, by the free gospel offer and invitation, so that he leaveth nothing for our faith to do, but to lay hold of him as a free-gift, that the glory of our salvation may not be ascribed at all to our faith or works, but only to this free-grace of God in Christ, *it is of faith that it may be by grace, Rom. iv. 16.*

2 *Fifthly*, Christ or his apostles never taught a gospel that requireth such a condition of works for salvation as they plead for. The texts of scrip-

scripture which they usually alledge for their purpose, are either contrary to it, or widely distant from it, as they might learn from many protestant interpreters, if their affection to a popish tenet had not blinded them. I shall instance briefly only in a few of those texts, whereby you may have some light to judge of the true meaning of the rest. That obedience of faith mentioned by the apostle Paul as the great design of gospel-preaching, *Rom. i. 5.* is as contrary to their condition of sincere obedience for salvation, as the law of faith is to the law of works, *Rom. iii. 23.* It is an obedience that consisteth in believing the report of the gospel, as the apostle explaineth himself, *Rom. x. 16.* They have not all obeyed the gospel, for *Esaias* saith, *Lord who hath believed our report.* Faith is said to be imputed for righteousness, not because it is a work of righteousness it self, but because we do by it renounce all confidence in any righteous works whatsoever, and trust on him that justifieth the ungodly, as is clear by that very text, which they usually pervert for their purpose, *Rom. iv. 5.* They grossly pervert those words of Paul, *Rom. ii. 6, 7.* *Who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life:* Where they will have Paul to be declaring the terms of the gospel, when he is evidently declaring the terms of the law, to prove that both *Jews* and *Gentiles* are all under sin, and that no flesh can be justified by the works of the law, as appeareth by the renour of his

following discourse, *Rom. iii. 9, 10.* They join evidently with the *Papists* against the concurrent judgment of the best *protestant* divines in the interpretation of that text, *Jam. ii. 24. To see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only:* Where they will have *James* to deliver the doctrine of justification in more proper expressions than the apostle *Paul*, who teacheth justification by faith without works, tho' *Paul* treateth on this doctrine as his principal subject, and *James* doth only speak of it occasionally, as a motive to the practice of good works, whereby we may easily judge which of their expressions are to be taken for the most proper. *Protestants* have shewed sufficiently, that *James* speaketh not of a true saving faith, but of such a dead faith as devils have; nor of justification in a proper sense, but of the declaration and manifestation of it by its fruits. Besides, he speaks of justification by works as commanded in the law given by *Moses*, as appeareth by his citing the commandments of the law, *v. 8, 11.* which our contrivers of the new divinity would have nothing to do with in their model of the doctrine of justification. Another text alledged by them is, *Rev. xxii. 14. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.* But the Greek word, which is here translated *right*, is translated *power* or *privilege*, *John i. 12.* It signifieth here a rightful possession of the fruit of the tree of life, and not a mere title to it: So this text proveth

no more than what the protestants generally acknowledge, that good works are the way wherein we are to walk to the enjoyment and possession of the glory of Christ, tho' a title to Christ, and his glorious salvation, be freely given us without any procuring condition of works. They account also, that when the happiness of heaven is called a reward, it must needs imply a procuring condition of works, as *Rev. xxii. 12. Matth. v. 12.* But tho' it be called a reward, because it is given after the doing of good works, and because it recompenseth good works, better than any wages on earth can recompense the labourer, yet it is a reward of grace, not of debt, *Rom. iv. 4. It is no proper wages, but a free gift, Rom. vi. 23. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Another thing asserted in the direction is, That those that endeavour to perform this sincere obedience, as the condition to procure a right and title to Christ and his salvation, *shall never be able to perform sincerely any true obedience by all such endeavours.* Tho' they labour earnestly, and pray fervently, fast frequently, and oblige themselves to holiness by many vows, and press themselves to the practice of it, by the most forcible motives taken from the infinite power, justice and knowledge of God, the equity, and goodness of his commands, the salvation of Christ, everlasting happiness and misery, or any other motive improved by the

most affectionate meditation; yet they shall never attain to the end which they aim at in such an erroneous way. They may restrain their corruptions, and bring themselves to many hypocritical slavish performances, whereby they may be esteemed among men as eminent saints; but they shall not be able to mortify one corruption; or to perform one duty in such a holy manner as God approveth. Yet here I censure only an *error*, not the life of the *persons* that maintain it. I have heard that some *preach* legally, and *pray* evangelically; I doubt not but the frame of their hearts and lives is rather according to their prayers than their sermons. Tho' *Peter* complied with *Judaism* in an outward act of profession, yet he lived himself like a christian, *Gal. ii. 11, 14*. I affirm only that no godly person did or could attain to his godliness in this erroneous way. And what a lamentable disappointment is this to those that have attempted to alter the *Protestant* doctrine, and to pervert and confound law and gospel, and have bred much contention in the church, that they might secure the practice of sincere obedience against *Antinomian* errors, by making it the procuring condition of their salvation, when after all this ado, the remedy is found to be as bad as the disease, equally unserviceable, and destructive to that great end for which they designed it, and that it hath an *Antinomian* effect and operation contrary to the power of godliness.

Much more might be said for the confutation of this novel doctrine, but if this one thing be well

well proved, it may be sufficient to make the zealous contrivers of it to be ashamed of their craft, and angry with themselves, and sorry that they have taken so much pains, and stretched their wits to maintain such an unprofitable, unsanctifying opinion. It will be sufficient for the proof of it, if I shew, that the practise of true holiness cannot possibly be attain'd unto, by *seeking to be saved by the works of the law*; because I have already proved that this doctrine of salvation by sincere obedience, is according to the terms of the law, and not of the gospel. And hereby those also may see their error that ascribe justification only to the gospel, and sanctification to the law. Yet, because those asserters of the condition of sincere obedience, will hardly be persuaded by what hath been said, that it is the way of the law of works; I shall for their full conviction sufficiently manifest, that *it is of no other nature and operation than any other doctrine that is proper to the law, and hath no better fruit*, as I proceed to prove, by the following arguments, that holiness cannot be attained by seeking it by the law of works, that so it may appear not worthy to be called gospel doctrine.

1st, The way of salvation by the works of the law is contrary and destructive to those necessary means of an holy practise, that have been laid down in the foregoing directions, and manifestly proved out of the holy scripture. I have made it appear, that a hearty propensity to an holy practise cannot be attained without some good persuasion of our reconciliation with

God by justification, and of our everlasting happiness, and of sufficient strength both to will and to perform our duty; and that these, and all other endowments necessary to the same end, are to be had only in Christ, by union and fellowship with him, and that Christ himself with all his fulness is united to us by faith, which is not a condition to procure a right or title to Christ, but an instrument whereby we receive him actually into our hearts, by trusting on him for all salvation freely promised to us in the gospel. All these means of an holy practice are things wherein our spiritual life and happiness doth consist; so that if we have them, everlasting life is begun in us already; and because they are the necessary means of an holy practice, therefore the beginning of everlasting life in us, must not be placed after such a practice, as the fruit and consequence of it, but must go before it, as the cause before the effect. Now the terms of the law are directly contrary to this method; they place the practice of holiness before life, and make it to be the means and procuring cause of life, as *Moses* describeth them, *Rom. x. 5. The man that doth these things shall live by them.* By these terms you are first to do the holy duties commanded, before you have any interest in the life promised, or any right to lay hold of it as yours by faith, and you must practise holiness without the forementioned means, or else you can never attain to them. Thus the true means are turned out of their office, and instead of being causes, they are made to be effects and fruits of

of an holy practise. And it will be in vain ever to expect such effects and fruits; for holiness itself with all its effects must needs be destroyed when its necessary causes are taken away. Therefore the apostle Paul testifieth, that the way of salvation by the works of the law maketh faith void, and the promises of none effect. And frustrateth the grace of God, as if Christ died in vain, and maketh Christ to be of no profit, and of none effect to us, as those that are fallen from grace, Rom. iv. 14. Gal. ii. 21. and v. 2, 4. Let us now examine the modern doctrine of salvation by the condition of sincere obedience to all the commands of Christ, and we shall quickly find it to be a chip of the same block with the former legal way of salvation, in the same manner destructive to the means of holiness, and to holiness it self. It requireth of us the performance of sincere obedience, before we have the means necessary to produce it, by making it antecedent to our justification and perswasion of eternal happiness, and our actual enjoyment of union and fellowship with Christ, and of that new nature, which is to be had only in him by faith. it destroyeth the nature of that saving faith, whereby we actually receive and enjoy Christ and all his benefits, and knocketh off our hands from laying hold of Christ and his salvation, by telling us still, as Christ told the legal-worker after all his labour, that yet we lack something, *Mark x. 21*. That it is presumption to take him as our own, until we have performed the condition for our right and title to him, which is another kind of saving

ing faith, otherwise called sincere obedience. By this devised conditional faith, satan keepeth many poor souls at a bay, poreing upon their own hearts for many years together, to find whether they have performed the condition, and whether they have as yet any right to Christ for their salvation, not daring to venture to take him as their own. It is a strong partition-wall that will certainly hinder the soul from coming to Christ, until it be thrown down by the knowledge of salvation by grace, without any procuring condition of works. And tho' it be accounted but as the payment of a pepper-corn for a great estate, yet it is enough to break the ablest man in the world, because it debarreth him from laying hold of the only effectual means of holiness, whereby that pepper-corn may be obtained.

2dly, Those that seek salvation by the works of the law, do therein act according to their natural state; they live and walk according to the flesh, or old man, not according to the new-state by Christ living in them. I doubt not but several of them that live under the light of the gospel are partakers of a new state in Christ, and do walk holily in it; but the best in this world have in them flesh as well as spirit, and may act according to either state in some measure, and in this matter they do act only according to their carnal natural state. When the believing *Galatians* were seduced to a legal way of salvation, the apostle *Paul* chargeth it upon them as their folly, *that having begun in the spirit, they would now be made perfect in the flesh.*

flesh, Gal. iii. 3. And he resembleth those that desire to be under the law, to *Abraham's* son born of *Hagar* the bond-woman, to shew that such do walk as those that *are born after the flesh, not after the spirit*, Gal. iv. 19, 23, 29. The Law was first given to *Adam* in his pure natural state, to prescribe terms for his continuance in the happiness which he then enjoyed. And ever since that time, the flesh or natural man is married to the law, and the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth, *i. e.* until he be dead to his fleshly state by the body of Christ, and married to him *that is risen from the dead*, Rom. vii. 1, 4. We are not at all under the law as a covenant of works according to our new state in Christ, as the apostle testifieth, Rom. vi. 14. *Ye are not under the law, but under Grace*, And Gal. v. 18. *If ye be led by the spirit, ye are not under the Law*. From hence we may firmly conclude that none can possibly attain to true godliness, by acting according to legal terms, because I have fully proved already, that it is impossible to be godly while we are in the flesh or in a natural state, and that as far as we act according to it, we can do nothing but sin. The law is weak thro' the flesh, that it cannot bring us to fulfil its own righteousness, Rom. viii. 3, 4. It is married to a cross piece of flesh that is enmity to it, and can never be subject to it, Rom. viii. 8. It sueth the natural man for an old debt of obedience that he is utterly unable to pay since the fall; and the success is accordingly, it gets nothing. Neither do those take a better

better course, that would bring themselves to holiness, by making sincere obedience to Christ's commands, the condition of their salvation. Their way is the same for substance with that of the *Galatians* before mentioned, who would be made perfect in the flesh, not by perfect obedience, but sincere, as hath been shewed before. Their endeavours to procure an interest in Christ by their sincere obedience, do testify against themselves, that they do not act as people that are in Christ, but rather as people that judge themselves to be without an interest in Christ, and to be yet to seek for it. And sincere obedience is as impossible to be attained unto as perfect obedience, if we act according to our dead natural state.

3dly, As the law bereaveth of all strengthening means, that are to be had by faith in Christ, and findeth us without strength in our natural state ; so of it self it affordeth us no strength to fulfil its own commands, *If there had been a law given that could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law, Gal. iii. 21.* It doth not so much as promise us life until we have performed the obedience required by it, *the man that doeth these things shall live by them, Rom. x. 5.* It is well called a *voice of words*, Heb. xii. 19. because its high and big words are not accompanied with any enlivening power ; and the doctrine of life and salvation by sincere obedience is not better natur'd or more bountiful to us : For it exacteth of us the performance of the condition, before it alloweth us any life or salvation by Christ. Can any man

rationally expect strength to obey sincerely, by following a doctrine that doth not so much as promise it. The true gospel is of a more benign nature, *For it promiseth that God will pour out of his spirit upon all flesh, Acts ij. 17. And will put his laws in our minds, and write them in our hearts, Heb. viii. 10. And will cause us to walk in his statutes, that we shall keep his judgments, and do them, Ezek. xxxvi. 27.* This word of God's grace, that requireth not holiness of us as a condition, but promiseth it to us as a free gift, must needs be the only doctrine that is able to build us up, and to give us an inheritance among them that are sanctified, Acts xx. 32. Seeing it pleaseth God to bring us to holiness by believing a doctrine, we may reasonably expect that God should work upon us suitably to the nature of the doctrine which we believe, that he should give by a giving doctrine, and exact by an exacting doctrine.

4thly, The way of procuring life and happiness by the condition of perfect or sincere works, is not a rational method for the recovery of fallen man, tho' it were good for the preserving of life before the fall: For it prescribeth the immediate practice of holiness to recover a man dead in sin; as if one should say to the sick of the palfie, *arise and walk, and then thou shalt be whole, able to walk;* we sometimes say jestingly to a child that is fallen on the ground, *come hither, and I will help thee up,* but if we should say so to one that is cast on his bed by a dead palfie, we should be guilty

ty of mocking and cruel insulting the afflicted. Those that are humbled and made sensible of their original sin and natural deadness, know that they must first live by the spirit, before they can act holily; *Gal. v. 25.* They will enquire, *how shall we have strength to perform the duty required?* If you answer, that they must trust in God and Christ to help them; they may readily reply, they have no sure ground to trust on God or Christ for any saving grace, according to this doctrine, before they have performed this condition, at least in a sincere resolution of obedience, and that they are as unable to bring their hearts to such a resolution, as a dead man is to raise himself out of the grave. Take another instance; the method of the doctrine of works is, you must love God first, and then on that condition he will love you again; whereas, on the contrary, we love God because he loved us first, *1 John iv. 19.* and if God suspend his love to us upon any condition, our love to him will not be absolute, but suspended upon the same condition, and no way contrary to an actual hating of him.

5thly, The law is so far from healing our sinful corruption, that it proveth rather an occasion of sinful motions and actings in those that seek salvation by the works of it. This cometh to pass by reason of the power of our natural corruption, which is stirred up and rageth the more, when the holy and just law of God is set in opposition against it, so that the fault is not in the law, but in our own hearts. Those that find not this by their own experience should believe

Heve the apostle *Paul*, who teacheth it plainly, and that from his own experience, *Rom. vii. 5. to 14.* He affirmeth, that there are motions of sin by the law in a fleshly state, and that sin taking occasion by the commandment, *thou shalt not covet*, wrought in him all manner of concupiscence, deceiv'd him, slew him, became exceeding sinful; and that without the law he was alive, and sin dead; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and he died. He sheweth the cause of this irreconcilable enmity and contrariety between his sinful nature, and the law; *the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.* Take notice here from the reason given by the apostle, that the doctrine of salvation by sincere obedience will have the same event. Corrupt nature is contrary to sincere obedience as well as perfect; and if we make it the condition of our salvation, sin will take the same occasion by it to become exceeding sinful in its motions and actings. The success of legal doctrine upon the natural man is according to the proverb, *reprove not a scorner lest he hate thee*, *Prov. ix. 8.* Rebuking a mad man is the way to enrage him; and such is the natural man in spiritual things since he fell out of his right mind by the sin of *Adam*. We find by manifold experience, that tho' men be generally addicted to the principle of salvation by works, yet multitudes of them hate all strict preachers and professors of true holiness, because they are a torment to their consciences. They endeavour to shelter themselves in ignorance of the law, accounting that the less they know, the less they

they shall answer for; and therefore they would not have right things prophesied unto them, *Isa. xxx. 10.* And they have prevailed generally in the world to darken the natural knowledge of moral duties in such a degree, that there is a necessity of learning them by divine revelation out of the scriptures. We may find how prone legal writers are to corrupt the sense of the law, that they may leave starting holes for their corruptions, by the corrupt glosses of the scribes and pharisees from which Christ did vindicate it, *Matth. v.* And as far as I have observed, none more endeavour to discover the purity and perfection of the law, than those that seek holiness and salvation, without any legal condition by the mere free-grace of God in Christ. The doctrine of salvation by sincere obedience, is but a mincing the perfection required in the law; and yet how is this doctrine minced again and again, until 'tis become so small, that the substance of all true obedience is lost. A willingness to be saved according to Christ's terms, or a consent that Christ should be our Lord, or a resolution to obey his commandments (which is little more than ignorant men trust on, when they say, they hope God will save them, because they have a good meaning, tho' they live in the neglect of all religion) without any further practice of holiness, shall pass with many for enough sincere obedience, both to enter them into a state of salvation, and to continue them in it; so that they shall never be accounted breakers of the gospel-covenant while so much can be pretended.

The

The most that is made necessary for salvation, shall be only to endeavour to do what we can to obey Christ's commands, tho' all that the most can do is nothing that is truly good. Those that have a little more zeal for their salvation by works, are prone to spend it in superstitious observances, because they suit better with their carnal nature than the spiritual commands of God and Christ. I doubt not but this hath been one occasion of the prevailing of *heathenish*, *jewish* and *popish* superstitions in the world. We find by experience how *popery* fell in several nations in late years when the great pillar of it, the doctrine of justification of works, was overthrown by the *protestant* doctrine of justification by faith alone. If these legal zealots be forced by strong conviction to endeavour the practice of spiritual duties for the quieting of their guilty consciences, they may be brought to strive and labour earnestly, and even to macerate their bodies with fasting, that they may kill their lusts; but still their lusts are alive, and as strong as ever they were, and do shew forth their enmity against the law of God by inward fretting, repining, and grudging at it as a grievous task-master, tho' a slavish fear restrain their gross outward actings. And if once these zealots be enlightened with the knowledge of the spiritual nature of the law, to discern that God rejecteth all their slavish service, and will not own it for sincere obedience, then they fall into despair of their salvation, because they see they have failed in their highest attempt to perform the condition, and then they can

easily discover themselves that their hearts swell in anger and manifest hatred against the law, yea, and against God and Christ for prescribing such hard conditions of salvation which they cannot keep, and yet must expect to be damned eternally for breaking them. This filleteth them with blasphemous thoughts against God and Christ, and they can hardly refrain from blaspheming with their tongues. And when they are brought to this horrible condition, if God doth not in mercy discover to them the way of salvation by free-grace, thro' faith alone, they will endeavour if they can to sear their consciences past feeling of sin, and fully to abandon all religion, which hath proved such an unsufferable torment to them: Or if they cannot sear their consciences, some of them are easily prevailed with by satan, rather to murder themselves than to live longer in the hatred of God, the spirit of blasphemy, and continual horror of conscience. This is the pestilent effect of legal doctrine upon a carnal heart, that doth but rouse up and terribly enrage the sleeping lion, our sinful corruption, instead of killing it, as is too evident by the sad experience of many that have endeavoured with all their might to practise it; and by the scripture, that sheweth a sufficient cause why it cannot be otherwise. Therefore the doctrine of salvation by sincere obedience, that was invented against *Antinomianism*, may well be ranked among the worst *Antinomian* errors. For my part I hate it with perfect hatred, and count it mine enemy, as I have found it to be:

And

And I have found by some good experience the truth of the lesson taught by the apostle, that the way to be freed from the mastery and dominion of sin, is *not to be under the law, but under grace*, Rom. vi. 14.

scily, The way of salvation by works was blasted by the curse denounced against the first Adam's sin, so that now it cannot work life in us, or holiness, but only death: For the law which requireth both sincere and perfect obedience to God in all things, was made known to Adam at his first creation, as the means of continuing the happy life that was then bestowed upon him; and it would have been effectual for this end, if he had not transgressed in the forbidden fruit: But when he had once brought himself and his posterity under the terrible sentence, *Thou shalt surely die*, Gen. ii. 17. all that knowledge of God, or his law that before wrought for continuance of life, was turned by that cursing sentence the contrary way to work for his death, even for the death of his soul in sin, as well as for the death of his body, and therefore it quickly moved him to hide himself from God as an enemy. It was as if God should say, *All the light and knowledge that thou hast, shall not be able to continue thy life, or restore it, but it shall rather tend to thy Death*. Therefore while we continue in our natural state under the first Adam's guilt and curse, the knowledge of the law, yea, and all such knowledge of God and his Attributes as natural men may attain to, must needs be in like manner accursed to us; and seeing man

did not use his natural knowledge and wisdom aright, God is resolved to revenge the abuse of it by giving us salvation in a way contrary to it, that seemeth foolishness to the natural man, and wholly to abolish the way of living by any of our works, or by any wisdom or knowledge that the natural man can attain unto; for it is written, *I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world: For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God. it pleaseth God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe,* 1 Cor. i. 19, 20, 21. Hence we may conclude, that no truth known by the light of nature can be an effectual principle or motive to work holiness in us; and gospel-principles and motives are but abused, when they are applied to a legal way of salvation.

7thly, The end which God aimed at in giving the law to *Moses*, was not that any should ever attain to holiness or salvation by the condition of perfect or sincere obedience to it; tho' if there had been any such way of salvation at that time, it must have consisted in the performance of that law which was then given to the church to be a rule of life as well as a covenant. There was another covenant made before that time with *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, a covenant of grace, promising all blessings freely thro' Christ, the promised seed, by which only they were to be saved: And the covenant of the law was added, that they might see their sinfulness and sub-

subjection to death and wrath, and the impossibility of attaining to life or holiness by their works, and be forced to trust on the free promise only for all their salvation, and that sin might be restrained by the spirit of bondage, until the coming of that promised seed Jesus Christ, and the more plentiful pouring out of the sanctifying spirit by him. This the apostle *Paul* sheweth largely, *Gal.* iii. 15. to 24. *Rom.* v. 20, 21. and *Rom.* x. 3, 4. None of the *Israelites* under the old-testament were ever saved by the *Sinai*-covenant, neither did any of them ever attain to holiness by the terms of it. Some of them did indeed perform the commandments of it sincerely, tho' imperfectly, but those were first justified and made partakers of life and holiness by virtue of that better covenant, made with *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, which was the same in substance with the new covenant or testament, establish'd by the blood of Christ. Had it not been for that better covenant, the *Sinai*-covenant would have proved to them an occasion of no happiness, but only of sin, despair and destruction. Of it self it was only a killing letter, the ministration of death and condemnation, and therefore it is now abolished, *2 Cor.* iii. 6, 8, 9, 11. We have cause to praise God for delivering his church by the blood of Christ from this yoke of bondage; and we have cause to abhor the device of those that would lay upon us a more grievous and terrible yoke, by turning our very new-covenant into a covenant of sincere works, and leaving us no such better co-

venant as the *Israelites* had under their yoke, to relieve us in our extremity.

D I R E C T I O N. VII.

We are not to imagine that our hearts and lives must be changed from sin to holiness in any measure, before we may safely venture to trust on Christ for the sure Enjoyment of himself and his salvation.

E X P L I C A T I O N.

WE are naturally so prone to ground our salvation upon our own works, that if we cannot make them procuring conditions and causes of our salvation by Christ, yet we shall endeavour at least to make them necessary preparatives to fit us for receiving Christ and his salvation by faith. And men are easily persuaded that this is not at all contrary to salvation by free grace, because all that is hereby ascribed to our works, or good qualifications, is only that they put us in a fit posture to receive a free gift. If we were to go to a prince for a free gift, good manners and due reverence would teach us to trim our selves first, and to change our slovenly cloaths, as *Joseph* did when he came out of the dungeon into the presence of *Pharaoh*. It seemeth to be an impudent slighting and contemning the Justice and holiness of God and Christ, and an insufferable affront and indignity offer'd to the divine majesty, when any dare presume to approach his presence in the nasty pickle of his sins, covered all over with putrifying sores, not at all clos'd, bound up

up or cleansed; much more when they endeavour to receive the most holy One into such an abominable stinking kennel, as a sinner's heart is before it be at all reformed. The parable concerning the man that was to be bound hand and foot, and cast into outer darkness for coming to the royal wedding without a wedding garment, seemeth to be intended as a warning against all such presumption, *Matt. xxii. 11, 13.* Many that behold with terror the abominable filth of their own hearts are kept off from coming immediately to Christ by such imaginations, which Satan strongly maintaineth and increaseth in them by his suggestions: So that they can by no means be perswaded out of them, until God teacheth them inwardly by the powerful illumination of his spirit; they delay the saving act of faith, because they think they are not yet duly prepared and qualified for it. On the same account many weak believers delay coming to the Lord's supper for many years together, even as long as they live in this world, and would be as likely to delay their baptism, if they had not been baptized in infancy. Against all such imaginations I shall propose the following considerations.

First, This error is pernicious to the practice of holiness, and to our whole salvation, in the same manner with that treated of in the foregoing direction, and may be confuted by the same arguments, which are there produced; whether holiness be made a procuring condition of our salvation thro' Christ, or only a condition necessary to qualifie us for the reception of Christ,

we are equally brought under those legal terms doing first the duties required in the law, that so we may live. Therefore we are equally bereaved of the assistance of those means of holiness mentioned in the foregoing directions, as union and fellowship with Christ and the enjoyment of all his sanctifying endowments by faith, which should go before the practice of holiness, that they may enable us for it; and we are equally left to labour in vain for holiness while we are in our cursed natural state, whereby our sinful corruption will be rather exasperated than mortified, so that we shall never be duly prepared for the reception of Christ as long as we live in the world. Thus while we endeavour to prepare our way to Christ by holy qualifications, we do rather fill it with stumbling blocks and deep pits, whereby our souls are hindered from ever attaining to the salvation of Christ.

Secondly, Any the least change of our hearts and lives from sin to holiness before our receiving of Christ and his salvation by faith, is not at all necessary according to the terms of the gospel, nor required in the word of God. Christ would have the vilest sinners come to him for salvation immediately without delaying the time to prepare themselves for him. When the wicked Jaylor enquired, what he must do to be saved, *Paul* directed him forthwith to believe on Christ, with a promise that in so doing he should be saved, and straightway he and all his were baptized, *Acts* xvi. 30, 33. *Paul* doth not tell him that he must reform his heart and life first, tho' he was in a very nasty pickle at that time,

time, having but a little before fastened *Paul* and *Silas* in the stocks, and newly attempted an horrid wilful self-murder. Those three thousand *Jews* that were converted by *Peter's* preaching, and added the same day to the church by baptism, *Acts* ii. 41. seemed to have as much need of some considerable time to prepare themselves for receiving Christ as others, because they had but lately polluted themselves with the murder of Christ himself, *v.* 23. Christ commands his servants to go quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and to bring in to his feast, the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind; yea to go out into the high-ways and to compel them to come in, without allowing them to tarry until they had cleansed their sores, and shifted off their filthy rags and swarms of lice. Christ would have us to believe on him that justifieth the ungodly, and therefore, he doth not require us to be godly before we believe, *Rom.* iv. 5. He came as a physician for the sick, and doth not expect that they should recover their health in the least degree before they come to him, *Matt.* ix. 12. The vilest sinners are fitly prepared and qualified for this design, which is to shew forth the exceeding riches of grace, pardoning our sins, and saving us freely, *Eph.* ii. 5, 7. For this end the law of *Moses* entered, that the offence might abound, that so, where sin abounded, grace doth much more abound, *Rom.* v. 20. He loved us in our most loathsome sinful pollution, so as to die for us, and much more will he love us in it, so as to receive us when we come to him for the purchased salvation

vation, he hath given full satisfaction to the justice of God for sinners, that they might have all righteousness, and holiness, and all salvation only by fellowship with him thro' faith; therefore it is no affront to Christ, or slighting and contemning the justice and holiness of God to come to Christ, while we are polluted sinners; but rather it is an affronting and contemning the saving-grace, merit and fulness of Christ, if we endeavour to make our selves righteous and holy before we receive Christ himself, and all righteousness and holiness in him by faith. Christ loathed not to touch a leper, and condescended to wash the feet of his disciples, and did not expect that they should be washed and perfumed before hand, as some great ones of the world are said to do, when they wash the feet of poor men in imitation of Christ.

Thirdly Those that receive Christ with an unfeigned faith, shall never want a wedding garment to adorn them in the sight of God. Faith it self is very precious in the sight of God, and most holy, 2 *Pet.* i. 1. *Jude* 20. God loveth it because it giveth the glory of our salvation only to the free-grace of God in Christ, *Rom.* iv. 16. and renounceth all dependance upon any conditions that we can perform to procure a right to Christ, or to make our selves acceptable to him. It containeth in it an hearty love to Christ as a Saviour, and an hungry and thirsting appetite for his salvation: And it is the mouth where-by the soul feedeth hungrily upon him. What wedding garment can sinners bring with them more delightful than this to their bountiful God,

whose

whose great design is to manifest the abundant riches of his glorious grace and bounty in his wedding feast? The father himself loveth them, because they love Christ, and believe that he came out from God, *John* xvi. 27. But yet we see that the excellency of faith lieth in this, that it accounteth not it self, or any other work of ours, a sufficient ornament to make us acceptable in the sight of God. It will not be our wedding garment it self, but it buyeth of Christ white raiment that we may be cloathed, and that the shame of our nakedness may not appear, *Rev.* iii. 18. Tho' it loveth and desireth the free-gift of holiness, yet it abandons all thoughts of practising holiness immediately before we come to Christ for an holy nature. It putteth on Christ himself, and in him all things that pertain to life and godliness. Thus every true believer is cloathed with the sun, *Rev.* xii. 1. even with the sun of righteousness the Lord Jesus, who is pleased to be himself both our wedding garment and feast, and all our spiritual and eternal happiness.

For the more full satisfaction and consolation of those distressed souls that lie under the terrible apprehensions of their own sinfulness and the wrath of God, and dare not venture to trust stedfastly on Christ, for their salvation, untill they can find in themselves some change from sin to holiness; I shall mention particularly several of those things that such would find in themselves: And I shall shew, that if some of them be not partly *comprehended* in faith it self, they are *Fruits* and *Consequences* of faith; and

and therefore they cannot be rationally expected before we trust on Christ for our salvation.

1st, They think it necessary to *repent* before they believe on Christ for their salvation, because repentance is absolutely necessary to salvation, *Luke xiii 3. Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish*; and Christ placeth the duty of repentance before faith, *Mark i. 15. Repent and believe the gospel*. But we are to know that Christ requireth repentance first as the end to be aimed at, and faith in the next place, as the only means of attaining to it; and tho' the end be first in intention, yet the means are first in practice and execution, tho' both be absolutely necessary to salvation. For what is repentance, but an hearty turning from sin to God and his service? And what way is there to turn to God, but thro' Christ, *who is the way, the truth, and the life, without whom none cometh to the father*? *John xiv. 6*. And what way is there of coming to Christ, but by faith? Therefore, if we would turn to God in the right way, we must first come to Christ by faith, and faith must go before repentance, as the great instrument afforded us by the grace of God for the effectual performance of it. Repentance is indeed a duty which sinners owe naturally to God; but the great question is, How shall sinners be able to perform it? This question is resolved only by the gospel of Christ, *Repent and believe*. The way to repent is to begin with believing. Therefore the great doctrine of *John* in his baptism of repentance was, That they should believe on him that should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus, *Acts xix. 4.*

2dly,

2dly, *Regeneration* also is necessary to salvation, *John* iii. 3. and therefore many would find it wrought in themselves, before they trust on Christ for salvation. But consider what regeneration is, it is a new begetting or creating us in Christ, *1 Cor.* iv. 15. *Eph.* ii. 10. in whom we are partakers of a divine nature far different from that which we received from the first *Adam*. Now faith is the uniting grace whereby Christ dwelleth in us, and we in him, as hath been shewed, and therefore it is the first grace wrought in our regeneration, and the means of all the rest; when you truly believe, you are regenerated, and not till then. Those that receive Christ by believing, and those only are the sons of God, *which are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God,* *John* i. 12, 13.

3dly, They account it necessary to receive Christ as *Lord* and *Law-giver* by a sincere resignation of themselves to his government, and a resolution to obey his Law, *before* they receive him as their saviour. This is one principal lesson of the new divinity, and such a receiving Christ as Lord is made to be the great act of saving faith, without which such faith as I have described, whereby we trust on Christ for salvation, is reckoned no better than gross presumption. They teach that Christ will not bestow his salvation on those that do not first yield their subjection to his kingly authority, but he calleth them his enemies, because they would not that he should reign over them, and requireth that they be brought and slain before him, *Luke* xix. 27.

And

And I own it as a certain truth, that Christ will save none but those that are brought to resign themselves sincerely to the obedience of his royal authority and laws. But yet we must observe, that they are not brought to this holy resignation, or to any sincere purpose and resolution of obedience before they receive his salvation, but rather by receiving it. Men that were never thoroughly sensible of their natural death in sin, do easily bring themselves to resolve universal obedience to God when they are on their death-beds, or in any imminent danger, or when they would prepare themselves for the Lord's supper, that so they may make their peace with God, and trust securely on Christ for his salvation; but all resolutions of that kind are vain and hypocritical, sooner broken than made. Those that know the plague of their own hearts, do find that their mind is enmity unto the law of God and Christ, and cannot be subject unto it, *Rom. viii. 7.* and that they can as soon remove a mountain as give up themselves sincerely to obedience before they trust on Christ for his salvation, and for the gift of a new heart, whereby they may be enabled both to will and to do any thing that is acceptable to God. We should have been sufficiently obliged to all obedient purposes, resolutions and resignations, if Christ had never come into the world to save us; but he knew that we cou'd perform nothing holily, except he made us first partakers of salvation, and that we shall never obey him as Law-giver, untill we receive him as Saviour. He is a saving Lord, trust on him first to save you from the guilt and power

of sin, a
a new
then, th
resign y
for you,
say with
I am th
Son of t
Psalm. cx
athly
good wo
Christ f
our savi
men the
father f
pray, I
debtors.
to be m
thers,
made b
answer,
others,
or at le
are ver
our fins
er, and
ing gra
be with
pray o
them;
before
vation,
tically,
forgivi

of sin, and dominion of Satan, and to give you a new spiritual disposition; then, and not till then, the love of Christ will constrain you to resign your self heartily to live to him that died for you, 2 Cor. v. 14. and you will be able to say with an unfeigned resolution, *O Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant, and the Son of thy handmaid; thou hast loosed my bonds,* Psal. cxvi. 16.

Arbly, It seemeth to them evident, that some good works are necessary, before we can trust on Christ safely for the forgiveness of sins; because our saviour teacheth us, that if we forgive not men their trespasses, neither will our heavenly father forgive our trespasses, and directeth us to pray, *Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,* Matth. vi. 12, 15. Restitution also was to be made of things wrongfully gotten from others, before the sacramental atonement was made by the trespass-offering, *Lev. vi. 5, 7.* I answer, this is sufficient to prove, that forgiving others, and restitution according to our ability, or at least a sincere desire and purpose so to do, are very closely joined with the forgiveness of our sins, and are very necessary to fit us for prayer, and for sacramental applications of pardoning grace to ourselves. A lively faith cannot be without these fruits, and therefore we cannot pray or partake of sacraments in faith without them; but yet if we strive to do either of these before we trust on Christ for our pardon and salvation, we shall do them slavishly and hypocritically, not in any holy acceptable manner. Our forgiving others will not be accompanied with any

any hearty love to them as to ourselves for the sake of God; and our restitution will be but a forced act, like *Pharaoh's* letting the children of *Israel* go, or like *Judas* restoring the thirty pieces of silver, being compelled thereunto by terror of spirit; and when the terror that forced us is removed, we shall be as ready to recall our forgiveness, and to wrong others again, as *Pharaoh* was to bring the *Israelites* again into bondage after he had let them go, *Exod. xiv. 5.* If you would forgive others heartily so as to love them again, you must first by faith in Christ apprehend the love and mercy of God towards your selves; and then you will be able, according to the apostle's instruction, *to be kind, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you, Ephes. iv. 32.* The readiness of *Zaccheus* to make restitution, followed upon a discovery of Christ's love to him; and his joyful receiving Christ into his house, was fruit whereby he did evidence the truth of that faith that was already wrought in his heart.

5thly, I shall reckon up together *several other qualifications*, that distressed souls would find in themselves, that they may be duly prepared to trust on Christ for their salvation; and when they have laboured anxiously a long time, and cannot get them; at last they ly down in sorrowful despondence, not daring to apply the consolations of the grace of God in Christ to their wounded consciences. Let perplexed souls mark the particulars, and observe whether the condition of their own souls be reached in any of them;

thim; O thou afflicted, tossed with tempests,
and not comforted, what good qualifications are
they that thou wouldst have, that thou mayest
be encouraged to lay hold on Christ for salvation?
It is likely thou wilt answer in the bitterness
of thy soul, "O let me have first some love
" to God and godliness in mine heart, and freedom
" from mine hateful heart-risings against
" him and his service. Let me have some good
" thoughts of God, his justice, mercy, holiness,
" that I may be able to justify him tho' he damn
" me, and that I may not be filled with mur-
" muring and hellish blasphemies in my mind
" against him; let the raging of my lusts be a-
" bated, and the stinking kennel of my wick-
" ed heart a little cleansed; let me have some
" holy reverential fear of God, and not only a
" pannick tormenting horror. I would be more
" affected with the wrath of God, and not be
" of a slighting heedless spirit; I would be more
" humbled for sin, loath it, and be ashamed of
" it, and be sorry for it with a godly sorrow, not
" merely because of the punishment, but be-
" cause it grieveth and vexeth the holy spirit of
" God; I would be able to make a willing and
" ingenuous confession of sin, and to pour out my
" soul to the Lord in lively affectionate pray-
" er for forgiveness, and to praise and glorify
" him heartily, and not be like a lifeless stone
" in the duty of prayer as I am." Are these
the things thou desirest, O poor distressed soul?
The best reply I can make for thy speedy com-
fort, is to inform thee, that the things are good,
but thy desires are not well timed; it is unrea-
sonable

sonable for thee to expect these holy qualifications, whilst thou art in thy natural state under the guilt of sin, and the apprehension of the wrath of God, before thou hast received the atonement, and the new spiritual life that is by Christ thro' faith in his name; thou dost but exasperate thy corruptions, and harden thy heart, and make thy wounds to stink the more because of thy foolishness; such good qualifications are included in the nature of faith, and for the most part they follow after it, so that they cannot possibly be obtained before thou trustest in Christ for thy salvation, as I shall shew concerning them particularly in their order. A love to the salvation of God, and to the free-gift of holiness, is included in the nature of faith, so that it cannot be hearty without it. A faith first, and the apprehension of God's love to thy soul will sweetly allure and constrain thee to love God and his service universally: We love him because he loved us first, 1 *John* iv. 19. We cannot be before-hand with God in love, and we must perceive his love to make us love him, for if we look upon him as a God contrary to us, that hateth us, and will damn us, our own innate self-love will breed hatred and heart-risings against him, in spite of our hearts; that love which is the end of the law must flow from faith unfeigned, 1 *Tim.* i. 5. And if hatred work in thee more than love, how canst thou expect good thoughts of God, or any other than blaspheming, or at least murmuring thoughts of him, in this condition? Ill-will never speaketh or thinketh well. The first right holy thoughts thou

thou canst have of God are thoughts of his grace and mercy to thy soul in Christ, which are included in the grace of faith. Get these thoughts first by believing in Christ, and they will breed in thee love to God, and all good thoughts of him, and free thee from blasphemous and murmuring thoughts by degrees, *for love thinks no evil*, 1 Cor. xiii. 9. Then wilt thou be able to account God just and merciful, if he had damned thee and extended his grace to others; and thou wilt be able to think well of his holiness, and of his decrees, which many cannot endure to hear of. The way to get rid of thy raging lusts is by faith, that purifieth the heart, and worketh by love, *Acts* xv. 9. *Gal.* v. 6. The soul must be brought to take pleasure in God and Christ by faith, or else it will lust after fleshly and worldly pleasures; and the more you strive against lusts without faith, the more they are stirred up tho' you prevail so far as to restrain the fulfilling of them: Beg a holy fear of God, with fear of coming short of the promised rest thro' unbelief, *Heb.* iv. 1. Such a fear is an ingredient of faith, and it will breed in us a reverential, yea, a child-like fear of God and his goodness, *Heb.* xii. 28. *Hos.* iii. 5. We must have grace whereby we may serve God with reverence, &c. It is in the margin, we must have or hold fast grace, and there is no other way to hold fast grace but by faith, and this will quickly calm all pannick and tormenting horror. And if you would be free from carelessness, and slighting the wrath of God, your way is first by believing to avoid despairing; for people grow careless by despairing, and for
K 2
their

their own quiet; they will endeavour to flight evils which they have no hope to prevent, according to the proverb. *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die*, 1 Cor. xv. 32. True humiliation for sin is either a part or fruit of faith, for on our believing we shall remember our own evil ways and doings that were not good, and shall loath our selves in our own sight for all our abominations, *Ezek. xxxvi. 31*. We shall also then willingly renounce our own righteousness, and account it but dung, that we may win Christ by faith, *Phil. iii, 7, 8*. But beggars will make the most of all their nasty rags, till they be furnished with better cloaths, and cripples will not cast away their crutches until they have a better support to lean on. Godly sorrow for sin is wrought in us by believing the pardoning grace of God, as it is found by experience, that a pardon from a prince will sometimes sooner draw tears from a stubborn malefactor than the fear of a halter will; thus the sinful woman was brought to wash Christ's feet with her tears, *Luke vii. 37, 38*. We are not like to be sorry for grieving God with our sins, while we look upon him as an enemy that will ease himself well enough of his burthen, and right himself upon us by our everlasting destruction. The belief of God's pardoning and accepting grace is a necessary means to bring us to an ingenuous confession of sins. The people freely confessed their sins when they were baptized of *John in Jordan for the remission of sins*, Mark i. 4, 5. The confession of despairers is forced like the extorted con-

confessions and cryings out of malefactors upon the rack. A pardon sooner openeth the mouth to an ingenuous confession, than confess and be hanged, or confess and be damped; therefore if you would freely confess your sins, believe first that God is faithful and just to forgive your sins thro' Christ, 1 *John* i. 9. And if you would pray to God, or praise him with lively affections, you must first believe that God will hear you, and give you what is best for you for Christ's sake; *John* xvi. 23, 24. otherwise your praying will be only from the teeth outward, for how shall you call on him in whom you have not believed, *Rom.* x. 14. You must come first to Christ the altar by faith, that by him you may offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, *Heb.* xiii. 10, 15.

Finally, to pass from particulars to the general assertion laid down in the direction, if you ask, *What shall we do that we may work the works of God*, or get any saving qualifications? I must direct you first to *Faith*, as the work of works, and the great saving preparatory to all good qualifications, by answering in our Saviour's words, *This is the Work of God, that ye believe in him whom he hath sent*, *John* vi. 28, 29.

K

DI

DIRECTION VIII.

Be sure to seek for holiness of heart, and life only in its due order, where God hath placed it, after union with Christ, Justification and the gift of the Holy Ghost, and in that order seek it earnestly by Faith, as a very necessary part of your Salvation.

EXPLICATION.

I Hope the reader will observe warily in all these directions, that the *Holiness* aimed at as the great end in the whole discourse, consisteth not in the grace or act of *faith* required peculiarly by the gospel; which tho' it be a saving gift of Christ, yet is here consider'd rather as a *means* precedent to the reception of Christ and all his salvation, than a part of his salvation received. But the holiness aimed at, consisteth in *conformity to the whole moral law*, to which we are naturally obliged, if there had never been any gospel, or any such duty as believing in Christ for salvation.

Now in this direction, *three* things are contained that are very necessary to guide us to the attainment of this great end, and therefore worthy of our serious consideration.

First, It is a matter of high concern, to be acquainted with the due place and order, wherein God hath settled this holy practice in the mystery of our salvation, and a great point of chri-

christian wisdom to seek it only in that order ; we know that God is the God of order, and that his infinite wisdom hath appeared in appointing the order of his creatures, which we are forced to observe for attainment of our ends in worldly things ; so also in spiritual things God hath made an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, 1 Sam. xxiii. 5. the benefits of it have an orderly dependence each upon other, as links of the same golden chain, tho' several of them, and a title to them all, are given to us at one and the same time ; and I think enough hath been said already, to shew in what order God brings us to the practice of the moral law ; he maketh us first to be in Christ by faith as branches in the vine, that we may bring forth much fruit, John xv. 5. He first purgeth our consciences from dead works by justification, that we may *serve the living God*, Heb. ix. 14. He maketh us first to *live in the spirit*, and then to *walk in the spirit*, Gal. v. 25. This is the order prescribed in the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation ; tho' the law prescribeth a quite contrary method, that we should first perform its commands, that so we may be justified and live, and thereby it proveth a killing letter to us. Now mark well the great advantages you have for the attainment of holiness, by seeking it in a right gospel order, you will have the advantage of the love of God manifested toward you, in forgiving your Sins, receiving you into favour, and giving you the spirit of adoption, and the hope of his glory freely thro' Christ, to per-

swade and constrain you by sweet allurements to love God again, who hath so dearly loved you, and to love others for his sake, and to give up your selves to the obedience of all his commands out of hearty love to him; you will also enjoy the help of the spirit of God to incline you powerfully unto obedience, and to strengthen you for the performance of it against all your corruptions, and the temptations of Satan; so that you will have both wind and tide to forward your voyage in the practice of holiness. Contrariwise if you rush upon the immediate performance of the law, without taking Christ's righteousness and his spirit in the way to it, you'll find both wind and tide against you; your guilty consciences and corrupt dead natures, will certainly defeat and frustrate all your enterprizes and attempts to love God, and serve him in love, and you will but stir up sinful lusts instead of stirring up your selves to true obedience; or at best you will but attain to some slavish hypocritical performances. Oh! that people would be perswaded to consider the due place of holiness in the mystery of salvation, and to seek it only there where they have all the advantage of gospel grace to find it. many miscarry in their zealous enterprizes for godliness, and after they have spent much labour in vain; God maketh a breach upon them, even to their everlasting destruction, as he did upon *Uzzah* to a temporal destruction, because they sought him not after a due order, 1 *Chron.* xiii. 11.

Secondly

Secondly, We are to look upon holiness as a very necessary part of that salvation that is received by faith in Christ; some are so drenched in a covenant of Works, that they accuse us for making good works needless to salvation, if we will not acknowledge them to be necessary, either as conditions to procure an interest in Christ, or as preparatives to fit us for the receiving him by faith; and others when they are taught by the scriptures that we are saved by faith, thro' faith without works, do begin to disregard all obedience to the law, as not at all necessary to salvation, and do account themselves obliged to it only in point of gratitude; If it be wholly neglected, they doubt not but free-grace will save them harmless; yea, some are given up to such strong *Antinomian* delusions, that they account it a part of the liberty from the bondage of the law purchased by the blood of Christ, to make no conscience of breaking the law in their conversation: One cause of these errors, that are so contrary one to the other is, that many are prone to imagine, nothing else to be meant by salvation, but to be delivered from hell, and to enjoy heavenly happiness and glory; hence they conclude, that if good works be a means of glorification, and precedent to it, they must also be a precedent means of our whole salvation; and if they be not a necessary means of our whole salvation they are not at all necessary to glorification. But tho' salvation be often taken in scripture by way of eminency, for its perfection in the state of heavenly glory; yet according to its full and proper signi-

signification, we are to understand by it, all that freedom from the evil of our natural corrupt state, and all those holy and happy enjoyments that we receive from Christ our Saviour, either, in this world by faith, or in the world to come by glorification. Thus, justification, the gift of the spirit to dwell in us, the privileges of adoption, are parts of our salvation which we partake of in this life: Thus also the conformity of our hearts to the law of God, and the fruits of righteousness with which we are filled by Jesus Christ in this life, are a necessary part of our salvation; God saveth us from our sinful uncleanness here, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, as well as from hell hereafter, *Ezek. xxxvi. 29. Tit. iii. 5.* Christ was called Jesus, *i. e.* a saviour, because he saved his people from their sins, *Mat. i. 21.* therefore it is part of our salvation to deliver us from our sins, which is begun in this life by justification and sanctification, and perfected by glorification, in the life to come. Can we rationally doubt whether it be any proper part of our salvation by Christ to be quickened to live to God, when we were by nature dead in trespasses and sins, and to have the image of God in holiness and righteousness restored to us which we lost by the fall, and to be freed from a vile dishonourable slavery to satan and our own lusts, and made the servants of God and to be honoured so highly as to walk by the spirit, and bring forth the fruits of the spirit? And what is all this but holiness in heart and life? **Conclude we then that holiness in**

life is absolutely necessary to salvation, not only as a means to the end, but by a nobler kind of necessity, as part of the end it self. Tho' we are not saved by good Works as procuring causes, yet we are saved to good works as fruits and effects of saving grace, which God hath prepared *that we should walk in them*, Ephes. ii. 10. It is indeed one part of our salvation to be delivered from the bondage of the covenant of works, but the end of this is, not that we may have liberty to sin (which is the worst of slavery) but that we may fulfil the royal law of liberty, and that we may serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter, Gal. v. 13. Rom. vii. 6. Yea holiness in this life is such a part of our salvation, as is a necessary means to make us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in heavenly light and glory; *without holiness we can never see God*, Heb. xii. 14. and are as unfit for the glorious presence, as swine for the presence chamber of an earthly prince. I confess some may be converted when they are so near the point of death, that they may have little time to practise holiness in this world, *but the grace of the spirit is active like fire*, Mat. iii. 11. And as soon as it is given, it will immediately produce good inward workings of love to God, and Christ, and his people, which will be sufficient to manifest the righteous judgment of God in saving them at the great day, when he shall judge every man according to his work, tho' some possibly may not have so much time to discover their inward grace in any

any outward good works, as the Thief upon the cross, *Luke xxiii. 40, 43.*

The third and last thing to be noted in this direction is, that holiness of heart and life is to be sought for earnestly by faith, as a very necessary part of our salvation. Great multitudes of ignorant people, that live under the gospel, harden their hearts in sin, and ruin their souls for ever, by trusting on Christ for such an imaginary salvation as consisteth not at all in holiness, but only in forgiveness of sin and deliverance from everlasting torments. They would be free from the punishments due to sin, but they love their lusts so well that they hate holiness, and would not be saved from the service of sin. The way to oppose this pernicious delusion, is not to deny, as some do, that trusting on Christ for salvation is a saving act of faith, but rather to shew that none do or can trust on Christ for true salvation, except they trust on him for holiness; neither do they heartily desire salvation, if they do not desire to be made holy and righteous in their hearts and lives: If ever God and Christ give you salvation, holiness will be one part of it; if Christ wash you not from the filth of your sins, you *have no part in him*, *John xiii. 8.* What a strange kind of salvation do they desire, that care not for holiness? They would be saved, and yet be altogether dead in sin, aliens from the life of God, bereft of the image of God, deformed by the image of Satan, his slaves, and vassals to their own filthy lusts, utterly unmeet for the enjoyment of God in glory. Such a salvation as that, was never purchased

chased by the blood of Christ, and those that seek it, abuse the grace of God in Christ, and turn it to lasciviousness. They would be saved by Christ, and yet out of Christ, in a fleshly state; whereas God doth free none from condemnation, but these that are in Christ, that walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit; or else they would divide Christ, and take a part of his salvation, and leave out the rest; but Christ is not divided, 1 Cor. i. 13. They would have their sins forgiven, not that they may walk with God in love in time to come, but that they may practise their enmity against him, without any fear of punishment; but let them not be deceived, God is not mocked, they understand not what true salvation is, neither were they ever yet thoroughly sensible of their lost estate and of the great evil of sin; and that which they trust on Christ for, is but an imagination of their own brains, and therefore their trusting is gross presumption. True gospel faith maketh us come to Christ with a thirsty apperite, that we may drink of living water, even of his sanctifying spirit, John vii. 37, 38. And to cry out earnestly to save us not only from hell, but from sin; saying, *Teach us to do thy will, thy spirit is good*, Psal. cxliiii. 10. *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned*, Jer. xxxi. 18. *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me*, Psal. li. 10. This is the way whereby the doctrine of salvation by grace, doth necessitate us to holiness of life, by constraining us to seek for it by faith in Christ, as

a substantial part of that salvation, which is freely given to us thro' Christ.

D I R E C T I O N IX.

We must first receive the comforts of the gospel, that we may be able to perform sincerely the duties of the law.

E X P L I C A T I O N.

Since man fell from obedience to God, which he was enabled and engaged to perform by the comforts of his first happy state in paradise, God might have justly refused ever to give man again any comforts before-hand to encourage him to his duty; that the way to holiness being hedged up against him with the thorns and briars of fear, grief and despair, he might never be able to escape the sentence of death, which was denounced against his first transgression. This justice of God is manifest in the method of the legal covenant, wherein God promiseth us no life, comfort or happiness until we have thoroughly performed his law, and may be seen in the mount *Sinai* promulgation explicated, *Levit. xxvi.* throughout. And we are by nature so strongly addicted to this legal method of salvation, that it is a hard matter to diswade those that live under the light of the gospel, from placing the duties of the law before the comforts of the gospel; if they cannot make salvation it self, yet they will be sure to make all the comforts of it to depend upon their own works. They think it as unreasonable to

ex-

expect comfort before duty, as wages before work, or the fruits of the earth before the husband-man's labour, 2 *Tim.* ii. 6. They account the only effectual way to secure the obedience we owe to the law of God, is to ground all our comforts on the performance of it, and that the contrary doctrine strengthens the hands of the wicked by prophesying peace to them where there is no peace, *Ezek.* xiii. 16, 22. and openeth the flood-gates to all licentiousness: Therefore some preachers will advise men not to be solicitous and hasty of getting comfort, but that they should rather exercise themselves diligently in the performance of their duty, and they tell them that in so doing, their condition will be safe and happy at last, tho' they never enjoy any comfort of their salvation, as long as they live in this world.

That you may rightly understand what I have asserted in the direction against such vulgar errors, take notice, that I do not make the *only* place of gospel-comfort to be *before* the duties of the law; I acknowledge that God *comforteth* his people *on every side*, *Psal.* lxxi. 21. both *before* and *after* the performance of their duty, and that the *greatest* consolations do follow after duty; yet some comforts God giveth to his people before hand, as advance-money, to furnish them for his service, tho' most of the pay comes in afterward. Neither do I hereby speak any Peace to those that continue in their sinful natural state; for the comforts I speak of, cannot be received without rejecting those false confidences, whereby natural men harden themselves.

selves in sin, nor without that effectual working of the spirit, whereby we are made good trees that we may bring forth good fruit. Tho' they are given before the sincere practice of the law, yet they are not given to us in our corrupt sinful nature, but in and with the new holy nature, which immediately produceth a holy practice, tho' it must necessarily go before, as the cause before the effect; and they are no other than comforts of those spiritual benefits by which our new estate and nature is produced, and of which it is constituted and made up, as the comforts of redemption, justification, adoption, the gift of the spirit, and the like. Neither do I intend here any transport or ravishment of joy or delight, but only such manner of comfort, as rationally strengthens in some measure against the oppression of fear, grief and despair which we are liable unto, by reason of our natual sinfulness and misery.

This explanation of the sense of my assertion, is sufficient to answer some common objections against it, and I hope the truth of it will be fully evidenced by the following arguments.

First, This truth is a clear consecratory from those principles of holiness that have been already confirmed. I have shewed that we must have a good perswasion of our reconciliation with God, and of our happiness in heaven, and of our sufficient strength both to will and to do that which is acceptable to God thro' Jesus Christ, that we may be rationally inclined and bent to the practice of holiness; and that these endowments must be had, by receiving Christ himself,

himself, with his spirit and all his fulness, by trusting on him for all his salvation as he is freely promised to us in the gospel; and that by this faith we do as really receive Christ, as our food by eating and drinking. Now let right reason judge, can we be perswaded of the love of God, of our everlasting happiness, and our strength to serve God, and yet be without any comforts? Can the glad tidings of the gospel of peace be believed, and Christ and his spirit actually received into the heart, without any relief to the soul from oppressing fear, grief, despair? Can the salvation of Christ be comfortless, or the bread and water of life, without any sweet relish to those that feed on him with hungry and thirsting appetites? God will not give such benefits as these to those that do not desire and esteem them above the world; and certainly the very receiving of them will be comfortable to such, except they receive them blindfold; which they cannot do, when the very giving and bestowing them openeth the Eyes of a sinner, and turns him from darkness to light, whereby he doth at least in some measure, see and perceive spiritually the things that concern his present and future peace, and reap some encouraging and strengthening comfort thereby to the practice of holiness.

Secondly, Peace, joy, hope, are recommended to us in scripture, as the spring of other holy duties; and fear and oppressing grief forbidden, as hindrances to true religion, *The peace of God keepeth our hearts and minds thro' Christ Jesus,* Phil. iv. 7. *Be ye not sorry, for the joy of the Lord*

Lord is your strength, Neh. viii. 10. Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure, 1 John iii. 3. Fear hath torment, he that feareth is not made perfect in love, 1 John iv. 18. This is the reason why the apostle doubleth his exhortation, to rejoice in the Lord always, as a duty of exceeding weight and necessity, Phil. iv. 4. What are such duties but comfort itself, and can we think that these duties are necessary to our continuance in an holy practice, and yet not to the beginning of it, where the work is most difficult, and encouragement most needful? Therefore we must make haste in the first place to get a comfortable frame of spirit, if we would make haste, and not delay to keep God's holy commandments.

Thirdly, The usual method of gospel-doctrine, as it is delivered to us in the holy scriptures, is first to comfort our hearts, and thereby to establish us in every good word and work, 2 Thess. ii. 17. And it appears how clearly this method is adjusted in several epistles written by the apostles, wherein they first acquaint the churches with the rich grace of God towards them in Christ, and the spiritual blessings which they are made partakers of, for their strong consolation, and then they exhort them to an holy conversation answerable to such privileges. And it is not only the method of whole epistles, but of many particular exhortations to duty, wherein the comfortable benefits of the grace of God in Christ, are made use of as arguments and motives to stir up the saints to a holy practice; which

which comfortable benefits must first be believed, and the comfort of them applied to our own souls, or else they will not be forcible to engage us to the practice for which they are intended. To give you a few instances out of a multitude that might be alledged, we are exhorted to practise holy duties, because we are dead to sin, and alive to God thro' Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. vi. 11. And because sin shall not have dominion over us, for we are not under the law but under grace, Rom. vi. 14. Because we are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, and God will quicken our mortal bodies by his spirit dwelling in us, Rom. viii. 9, 11, 12. Because our bodies are the members of Christ, and the temples of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. vi. 15, 19. Because God hath made him sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. v. 21. And hath promised that he will dwell in us, and walk in us, and be to us a father, and we shall be to him sons and daughters, 2 Cor. vi. 18. with ch. vii. 1. Because God hath forgiven us for Christ's sake, and accounteth us his dear children, and Christ hath loved us and given himself for us, and we that were sometimes darkness, are now light in the Lord, Eph. iv. 32. and v. 1, 2, 8. Because we are risen with Christ, and when Christ who is our life shall appear, then we shall also appear with him in glory, Col. iii. 1, 4. Because God hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, Heb. xiii. 5. Because of the many promises made to us, 2 Cor. vii. 1. Search the scriptures, and you may with delight see that this is the vein

what runneth thro' gospel exhortations, and you may find the like vein of comfort running thro' the propheticall exhortations in the Old Testament.

Some may object, That the apostles used this method in their writings to saints, who had practised holiness already, that so they might continue and increase therein. But to that I may easily reply, If it be a method needful for grown saints, much more for beginners that find the work of obedience most difficult, and have most need of strong consolation; and I hope to shew how we may be able to lay hold of these consolations by faith in the very first beginning of a holy life. Besides, the gospel proposeth peace and comfort freely to those that are not yet brought to holiness, that if they have hearts to receive it, they may be converted from sin to righteousness. When the apostles enter'd into an house, they were first to say, *Peace be to the house*, Luke x. 5. At their first preaching to sinners, they acquainted them with the glad tidings of salvation by Christ, for every one that would receive it as a free-gift by faith, Acts iii. 26. and xiii. 26, 32, 38. and xvi. 30, 31. They assured them if they would but trust heartily on Christ for all his salvation, they should have it, altho' they were at present the chief of sinners; which was comfort sufficient for all that duly esteem spiritual comfort, hungry and thirsting after it. And this is a method agreeable to the design of the gospel, which is to advance the riches of the grace of God in all our spiritual enjoyments; God will give us his consolations before our good works, as well as after them, that

that we may know that he giveth us everlasting consolation, and good hope thro' grace, and not thro' the procurement of our works, 2 *Theff.* ii. 16.

Fourthly, The nature of the duties of the law requireth a comfortable state of the soul for the performance of them. I have before proved sufficiently, that they require a perswasion of our reconciliation with God, and of our future happiness, and strength, whereby we may be able to walk in holy obedience; *Josbua* must be strong and very couragious, that he might observe to do according to the law that *Moses* the servant of the Lord comanded him, *Josb.* i. 7. I shall instance briefly in the comforts, without which several great duties cannot be sincerely performed. Can we love God, and delight in him above all, while we look upon him as our everlasting enemy, and apprehend no love and mercy in him towards us, that may render him a suitable good for us, and lovely in our eyes? What doleful melody will the heart make in the duty of praise, if we account, that all those perfections for which we praise him, will rather aggravate our misery, than make us happy? What a heartless work will it be to pray to him, and to offer up ourselves to his service, if we have no comfortable hope that he will accept us? Is it possible for us to free ourselves from carking cares, by casting our care upon the Lord, if we do not apprehend he careth for us? Can we be patient in affliction with cheerfulness, and under persecutions, except we have peace with God, and rejoice in hope of the glory

of God? Rom. v. i, 2, 3. What reason can persuade us to submit willingly, according to our duty, to the stroke of present death, if God be pleased to lay it upon us, when we have no comforts to relieve us against the horrible fear of intolerable torments in hell for ever?

If we should be called to suffer martyrdom for the protestant religion, as our ancestors in this nation have done, we should find it necessary to abandon the late upstart notions that have been bred in a time of ease, and to embrace the comfortable doctrine of former *protestants*, which thro' the grace of God made so many courageous and joyful martyrs.

Fifthly, The state of those that are to be brought from sin to godliness, requires necessarily, that after they be convinced of the vanity of their former false confidences, and of their deadness in original sin, and subjection to the wrath of God, they should have a supply of new gospel comforts afforded to encourage their fainting souls to holy practices. How little do many physicians of souls consider the condition of their unconverted patients, that are altogether without spiritual life and strength, and are or must be convinced thereof? He that prescribeth bodily exercise to a man lying bed-ridden under a dead palsy, before any effectual means be used to strengthen him, deserveth the name of a merciless insulting tormentor, rather than of a wise and tender-hearted physician. How unreasonable is it to prescribe the immediate practice of love to God, and universal obedience to him out of love, as the means of cure, for those that

see nothing but wrath and enmity in God towards them in their present condition? What is it but to require a man to work without strength, promising him that he shall have strength when his work is done? For comfort or joy is so called, because it strengthneth, *Neb. viii. 10.* True it is that the law, which is the ministration of condemnation, obligeth them to obedience; but our merciful God expecteth no sincere performance of his law, from such impotent miserable wretches, in order to their salvation by Christ, till he hath first delivered them in some measure from those discomforts, slavish fears and despondencies, that hold them captive under the law of sin and death. We may require a strong healthy person, first to work, and then to expect meat, drink, and wages; but a fainting, famished person, must first have food, or a reviving cordial to strengthen his heart before he can work.

Sixthly, Both scripture and experience shew, that this is the method whereby God bringeth his people from sin to holiness. Tho' some of them are brought under terrors for a while, that sin may be the more imbittered, and the salvation of Christ rendred more precious and acceptable to them, yet such are again delivered from their terrors by the comfort of God's salvation, that they may be fitted for holiness; and generally a holy life beginneth with comfort, and is maintained by it. God gave to *Adam* at his first creation, the comfort of his love and favour, and the happiness of paradise to encourage him to obedience, and when he had lost those comforts by the fall, he was no longer able to obey until

he was restored by new comfort of the promised Seed. Christ, the second *Adam*, set God always before his face, and he knew, that because God was at his right hand, he should not be moved, therefore his heart was glad, and his glory rejoiced, Psal. xvi. 8, 9. This made him willing to bear his agony and bloody sweat, and to be obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, God drew the *Israelites* to obedience with the cords of a man, with the bonds of love, by taking off the yoke from their jaws, and laying meat before them, *Hos.* xi. 4. *David* telleth us for our instruction, how he was brought to an holy conversation. Thy loving kindness is before mine Eyes, and I have walked in thy truth, Psalm xxvi. 3. Lord I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments, Psal. cxix. 166. We have several examples in the new testament of the joy that sinners had in the first receiving of Christ, *Acts* ii. 41. And when the gospel first came to the *Thessalonians*, they received the word in much affliction with joy in the Holy Ghost, 1 *Thess.* i. 4, 5, 6. When the *Gentiles* heard the word of God they were glad, and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. The Apostle Paul was constrained by the love of Christ to give up himself to live to Christ, 2 *Cor.* v. 14, 15. I dare appeal to the experience of any that obey God out of hearty love; let them examine themselves, and consider whether they were brought to give up themselves to serve God in love, without comfortable apprehensions of the love of God towards them,

them, I dare say there are no such prodigies in the new birth.

Seventhly, What comfortless religion do those make, that allow people no comfort beforehand to strengthen them for holy performances? which are very cross displeasing and grievous to their natural inclinations, as the plucking out a right eye, cutting off a right hand; but would have them first to do such things with love and delight under all their present fears, despondencies, and corrupt inclinations, and to hope that by doing the work thoroughly and sincerely, they shall at last attain to a more comfortable state. All true spiritual comfort, as well as salvation, is indeed quite banished out of the world, if it be suspended upon the condition of our good works, which hath already appeared to be the condition of the law, that worketh no comfort but wrath, *Rom. iv. 15*. This makes the ways of godliness odious to many, they think they shall never enjoy a pleasant hour in this world, if they walk in them; and they had rather comfort themselves with sinful pleasures than have no comfort at all. Others labour a while in such a comfortless religion, with inward fretting and repining at the bondage of it, and at last grow weary and throw off all religion, because they know none better. They that bind such heavy burdens upon men, and grievous to be born, will plead, that they are not to be blamed, because they do but preach the gospel of God and Christ; whereas indeed they preach a gospel of man's own forging, contrary to the nature of the true gospel of Christ, which is glad tidings of great joy

joy to all people; *Luke ii. 10.* An uncomfortable gospel cannot proceed from God the father, who is *the father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, 2 Cor. i. 3.* Nor from *Christ who is the consolation of Israel, Luke ii. 25.* nor from the *spirit* who is the *comforter, John xiv. 16, 17.* God *meeteth him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, Isa. lxiv. 5.* He will be served with gladness and singing, as he shewed by the type of variety of musick, and great numbers of musicians in the temple; Christ speaks to us by his gospel, that his joy may abide in us, and that our joy may be full, *John xv. 11.* No sorrow is approved of by God, except godly sorrow, which can never be in us without some comfort of the love of God towards us. They that are offended at the uncomfortableness of a religious life, never yet knew the true way of religion, else they would find that the *ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths peace, Prov. iii. 17.*

DIRECTION X.

That we may be prepared by the comforts of the gospel to perform sincerely the duties of the law, we must get some assurance of our salvation in that very faith whereby Christ himself is received into our hearts; therefore we must endeavour to believe on Christ confidently, perswading and assuring our selves in the act of believing, that God freely giveth to us an interest in Christ and his salvation according to his gracious promise.

EXPLICATION.

IT is evident that these comforts of the gospel, that are necessary to an holy practice, cannot be truly received without some assurance of our interest in Christ and his salvation; for some of those comforts consist in a good perswasion of our reconciliation with God, and of our future heavenly happiness, and of strength both to will and to do that which is acceptable to God through Christ, as hath been before shewed: Hence it will clearly follow, that this assurance is very necessary to enable us for the practice of holiness, as those comforts that must go before the duties of the law in order of nature, as the cause goeth before the effect, tho' not in any distance of time. My present work is to shew, what this assurance is that is so necessary unto holiness, and which I have here asserted we must act, in that very faith whereby we receive Christ himself into our hearts, even in justifying saving faith

faith. This doctrine seemeth strange to many that profess themselves protestants a late days; whereas it was formerly highly owned by the chief protestants whom God made use of to restore the purity of the gospel, and to maintain it against the papists for many years; they commonly taught that faith was a perswasion or confidence of our own salvation by Christ, and that we must be sure to apply Christ and his salvation to our selves in believing: And this doctrine was one of the great engines whereby they prevailed to overthrow the popish superstition, whereof doubtfulness of salvation is one of the principal pillars. But many of the Successors of those protestants have deserted them, and left their writings to be shamefully insulted by the papists; and this innovation hath been of longer standing amongst us than several other-parts of our new divinity, and maintained by those that profess to abhor that corrupt doctrine which the papists have built upon such principles. Modern divines may think they stand upon the shoulders of their predecessors, whose labours they enjoy, and that they can see farther than they, as the schoolmen might have like thoughts of the ancient fathers; but for all this they may not be able to see so far, if the eyes of their predecessors were better enlightened by the spirit of God to understand the mystery of the gospel. And why may we not judge that it is so in the present Case? The eyes of men in these late years have been blinded in this point of assurance by many false imaginations. They think, because salvation is not

promi-

promised to us absolutely, but upon condition of believing on Christ for it ; therefore we must first believe directly on Christ for our salvation, and after that we must reflect our minds upon our faith, and examine it by several marks and signs, especially by the fruit of sincere obedience ; and it upon this examination we find out certainly that it is true saving faith, then, and not before, we may believe assuredly that we in particular shall be saved : On this account they say that our salvation is by the direct, and our assurance by the reflex act of faith, and that many have true faith, and shall be saved ; that never have any assurance of their salvation as long as they live in this world ; they find by scripture and experience, that many precious saints of God are frequently troubled with doubtings, whether they shall be saved, and whether their faith and obedience be sincere, so that they cannot see assurance in themselves ; therefore they conclude that assurance must not be accounted absolutely necessary to justifying faith and salvation, lest we should make the hearts of doubting saints sad, and drive them to despair. They account that former protestants were guilty of a manifest absurdity, in making assurance to be of the nature and definition of saving faith, because all that hear the gospel are bound to saving faith, and yet they are not bound absolutely to believe that they themselves shall be saved ; for then many of them would be bound to believe that which is not declared in the gospel concerning them in particular ; yea that which is a plain lie, because the gospel sheweth that many of those that are called are not chosen to sal-

salvation, but perish for ever, *Mat. xx. 16.* No wonder if the appearance of so great an absurdity move many to imagine, that saving faith is a trusting or resting on Christ as the only sufficient means of salvation without any assurance; or that it is a desiring and venturing to trust or rely upon him in a mere state of suspense and uncertainty concerning our salvation, or with a probable opinion or conjectural hope of it at best.

Another objection against this doctrine of assurance is, that it destroyeth self examination, bringeth forth the evil fruits of pride and arrogancy, as if they knew their places in heaven already before the day of judgment, causeth carelessness of duty, carnal security, all manner of licentiousness. And this maketh them commend doubtfulness of our salvation, as necessary to maintain in us humility, religious fear, watchfulness, much searching and trying our spiritual state and ways, diligence in good works, and all devotion.

Against all these contrary imaginations, I shall endeavour to maintain this antient protestant doctrine of assurance, which I have expressed in the direction; and first I shall lay down some observations for the right understanding of it, which will be sufficient to turn the edge of the strongest objections that can be made against it.

First, Observe diligently that the assurance directed unto, is not a perswasion that we have already received Christ and his salvation,

or

or that we have been already brought into a state of grace, but only that God is pleased graciously to give Christ and his salvation unto us, and to bring us into a state of grace, tho' we have been altogether in a state of sin and death until this present time; so that this doctrine doth not at all tend to breed presumption in wicked and unregenerate men, that their state is good already, but only encourageth them to come to Christ confidently for a good state. I acknowledge that we may, yea many must be taught to doubt whether their present state be good; and that it is humility so to do, and that we must find out the certainty and sincerity of our faith and obedience by self examination, before we can have a well grounded assurance that we are in a state of grace and salvation already; and that such an assurance belongeth to that which they call the reflex act of faith (if any act of faith can be made of it, it being spiritual sense or feeling of what it is my self) and is not of the essence of that faith whereby we are justified and saved; and that many precious saints are without it, and subject to many doubts that are contrary to it, so that they may not know at all that it shall go well with them at the day of judgment; and that it may be sometimes intermitted, if not wholly lost after it is gotten, and that we should strive to walk holily, that we may attain to it, because it is very useful for our growth and encrease in faith, and in all holiness. Most *Protestants* among us, when they speak or write of assurance, mean only that which is by reflection; and I have said

said enough briefly to shew, that what I assert, is consistent with the doctrine which is commonly received concerning it, and destructive to none of the good fruits of it, therefore not guilty of those evils that some falsely charge it with. This kind of assurance which I speak of, answereth not the question, whether I am already in a state of grace and salvation? There is another great question that the soul must answer, that it may get into a state of Grace. Whether God be graciously pleased now to bestow Christ and his salvation upon me, tho' I have been hitherto a very wicked creature? We must be sure to resolve this question comfortably, by another kind of assurance in the *direct* act of faith, wherein we are to perswade our selves (without reflecting upon any good qualifications in ourselves) that God is ready graciously to receive us into the arms of his saving mercy in Christ, notwithstanding all our former wickedness, according to that gracious promise, *I will call them my People, which were not my People; and her beloved, which was not beloved, and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, there shall they be called the children of the living God,* Rom. ix. 25, 26.

Secondly, The assurance directed unto, is not a perswasion of our salvation, whatever we do, or however we live and walk; but only in a limited way thro' mere free Grace in Christ, by partaking of holiness as well as forgiveness, and by walking in the way of holiness to the enjoy-

joyment of the glory of God. We shall not heartily desire or endeavour to assure our selves of such a salvation as this, if we be not brought first to see our own sinfulness, and misery, and to despair of our own righteousness and strength, and to hunger and thirst for the sanctifying as well as justifying grace of God in Christ, that so we may walk in the ways of holiness to the enjoyment of heavenly glory. The faith whereby we receive Christ, must have in it not only a perswasion of happiness, but these and the like good qualifications that will make it a most holy faith. Certainly an assurance thus qualified will not beget any pride in us, but rather humility and self-loathing, except any account it pride to rejoyce and glory in Christ, when we have no confidence in the flesh, *Phil. iii. 3.* It will not destroy religious fear, and breed carnal security; but rather it will make us fear going aside from Christ our only refuge and security, and walking after the flesh. *Noah* had cause to enter into the ark, and to abide there with assurance of his preservation; yet he might well be afraid to venture out of the ark, because he was perswaded that continuance in the ark was his only safety from perishing in the flood. And how can a perswasion of salvation in a way of holiness, breed sloathfulness in duty, carelessness and licentiousness? It doth rather mightily allure us, and stir us up to be always abounding in the work of the Lord, *for as much as we know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord, 1 Cor. xv. 58.* They that are perswaded of the free-grace of God toward them in Christ, are not indeed solicitous about

earning their salvation by their own legal works; and satan is ready to suggest to them, that this is a sinful carelesness, and tendeth to licentiousness: But they that will believe this false suggestion of satan, shew plainly, that they do not yet know what it is to serve God in love, and that they are held in, to all their obedience, by the bit and bridle of slavish fear, *as the Horse and mule that have no understanding*, Psal. xxxii. 9.

Thirdly, Beware of thinking so highly of this assurance, as if it were inconsistent with any doubting in the same, soul. A great reason why many *Protestants* have receded from the doctrine of their ancestors in this point, is because they think, there can be no true assurance of salvation in any that are troubled with doubtings, as they find many be, whom they cannot but own as true believers, and precious saints of God. True indeed, this assurance must be contrary to doubtings in the nature of it; and so if it be perfect in the highest degree, it would exclude all doubting out of the soul, and it doth now exclude it in some degree. But is there not flesh as well as spirit in the best saints on earth, *Gal. v. 17*. Is there not *a law in their members warring against the law of their minds*? *Rom. vii. 23*. may not one that truly believeth, say, *Lord help my unbelief*? *Mark ix. 24*. Can any on earth say, they have received any grace in the highest degree, and that they are wholly free from the contrary corruption? Why then should we think, that assurance cannot be true, except it be perfect, and free the soul from

from all doubtings? The apostle accounts it a great blessing to the *Thessalonians* that they had much assurance, intimating that some true assurance might be in a less degree, 1 *Thess.* i. 5. Peter had some good assurance of Christ's help, when he walked on the water at Christ's command; and yet he had some doubtfulness in him, as his fear shewed when he saw the wind boisterous. He had some faith contrary to doubting, tho' it were but little, as Christ's words to him shew, *O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?* Matth. xiv. 29, 30, 31. It is strange if the flesh and the devil should never oppose a true assurance, and assault it with doubtings. A believer may be sometimes so overwhelmed with doubtings, that he may not be able to perceive an assurance in himself, he is so far from knowing his place in heaven already, (as some scoffingly object) that he will say that he knoweth not any assurance that he hath of being there, and needeth diligent self-examination to find it out; yet if at that time he can blame his soul for doubting, *Why art thou cast down, O my soul, why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God for I shall yet praise him,* Psal. xlii. 11. If he can condemn his doubtings as sinful, and say with himself, *This is mine infirmity,* Psal. lxxvii. 10. these doubtings are of the flesh, and of the devil; if he still endeavour to call God father, and complain to him that he doubteth whether he be his father, and pray that God will give him the assurance of his fatherly love which he is not sensible of, and dispel

those fears and doubtings : I say that such an one hath some true assurance, tho' he must strive to grow to a higher degree ; for if he were not perswaded of the truth of the love of God towards him, he could not rationally condemn his fears and doubts concerning it as sinful, neither could he rationally pray to God as his father, or that God would assure him of that love that he doth not think to be true.

Do but grant that it is the nature of saving faith, thus to resist and struggle with slavish fears of wrath, and doubting of our own salvation, and you grant in effect, that there is, and must be something of assurance of our salvation in saving faith, whereby it resisteth doubtings, and you are in effect of the same judgment with me in the assertion, however strange my expressions seem to you. If this that I have said concerning our imperfection in assurance, as well as in other graces, were well consider'd, this antient *Protestant* doctrine would be freed much from prejudice, and gain more esteem among us.

Fourthly, In the last place, let it be well observed, that the reason why we are to assure our selves in our faith, that God freely giveth Christ and his salvation to us particularly is not, because it is a truth before we believe it, but because it becometh a certain truth when we believe it, and because it will never be true, except we do in some measure perswade and assure our selves that it is so. We have no absolute promise or declaration in scripture, that
God

God certainly will or doth give Christ and his salvation to any one of us in particular; neither do we know it to be true already by scripture, or sense, or reason, before we assure our selves absolutely of it; yea, we are without Christ's salvation at present in a state of sin and misery, under the curse and wrath of God. Only I shall prove, that we are bound by the command of God, thus to assure our selves, and the scripture doth sufficiently warrant us that we shall not deceive our selves in believing a lye, but according to our faith so it shall be to us, *Matth. ix. 29.* This a strange kind of assurance; far different from other ordinary kinds; and therefore no wonder, if it be found weak and imperfect, and difficult to be obtained, and it be assaulted with many doubtings. We are constrained to believe other things on the clear evidence we have that they are true, and would remain true, whether we believe them or no; so that we cannot deny our assent without rebelling against the light of our senses, and reason or conscience: But here our assurance is not impressed on our thoughts by any evidence of the thing, but we must work it out in our selves by the assistance of the spirit of God, and thereby we bring our own thoughts into captivity to the obedience of Christ. None but God can justly require of us this kind of assurance, because he only calleth those things that are not as tho' they were, *Rom. iv. 17.* He only can give existence to things that yet are not, and make a thing to be true upon our believing it, that was not true before. He only can make good that promise,

M ;

What

*What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them; and ye shall have them, Mark xi. 24. Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not, Lam. iii. 37. Therefore this faith is due to God only, and greatly redoundeth to his glory; men will often require a believing something like it, as when one says, I will forgive your offence, and be your friend, if I can find that you believe it, and that you take me for a friend; but their fallible word is not sufficient ground to make us persuade ourselves absolutely that we shall have their promised favour. The faith of miracles gives us some light in this matter; Christ assured them on whom they were wrought, and who had power given them of working them, that the miracles should be wrought, if they believed without doubting of the event, *Mark xi.* And there is a reason for this resemblance, because the end of working miracles was to confirm the doctrine of the gospel of salvation by faith in Christ's name, as the scriptures clearly shew, and indeed the salvation of a sinner is a very great miracle. It is reported, that wizards do often require those that come to them that they should believe they shall obtain what they desire of them, or at least that they are able to fulfil their desires, whereby the devil, the master of those wizards, sheweth himself to be God's ape, and that he would fain have that honour and glory ascribed to himself that is due to God alone.*

Having

Having thus explained the *nature* of that assurance which I directed unto, I shall now produce several arguments to prove, that *there is and must necessarily be such an assurance or persuasion of our salvation in saving faith itself.*

First, This assurance of salvation is implied in the description before given of that faith whereby we receive Christ, and his salvation into our hearts. I described faith to be a grace of the spirit, whereby we heartily believe the gospel, and also believe on Christ as he is revealed and freely promised to us therein for all his salvation. And I shewed in the explanation, that believing on Christ, is the same with resting, relying, leaning, staying ourselves on Christ, or God through Christ, for our salvation. It may be some will like that description the better, because faith was there described by terms that are ordinarily used, even by those that deny the necessity of assurance; but those ordinary terms do sufficiently include assurance in the nature of faith, and they cannot stand without it, and this sheweth that many hold the doctrine of assurance implicitly, and profess it, though they think the contrary. Believing on Christ for salvation as freely promised to us, must needs include a dependance on Christ with a persuasion, that salvation shall be freely given, as it is freely promised to us. Believing with a divine faith grounded on the infallible truth of the free-promise, if it did not in some measure exclude a mere suspence and wavering opinion or conjecture, were not worthy to be so called:

led. Some may be so absurd as to say, that faith is only a believing that we shall be saved by Christ if we perform such conditions as he requireth. And then indeed it will leave us where it found us as to any certainty of salvation until those conditions be performed; but I have already prevented such an absurdity, by shewing that this believing on Christ, is itself not only the condition of our salvation, but also the instrument whereby we actually receive it. Believing being the proper act of faith, must needs have the same contraries to it, as *staggering*, Rom. iv. 20. *Wavering*, Heb. x. 23. *Doubting*, Mat. xiv. 31. *Fear*, Mark v. 36. These contraries do much illustrate the nature of faith, and do shew that believing must have some confidence in it, else it would have doubting in the very nature of it; for what man that understandeth the preciousness of his immortal soul, and his danger of losing it, can ever avoid fear, doubting and trouble of heart, by any believing whereby he doth not at all assure himself of his salvation? The other terms of trusting and resting on Jesus Christ, &c. whereby faith is often described by orthodox teachers, must include assurance of salvation, because they signify the same thing with believing on Christ; the soul must have its sufficient support to bear it up against oppressing fears, troubles, cares, despair, that it may thus trust and rest. The right manner of trusting and hoping in the Lord is by assuring ourselves against all fears and doubtings, *That the Lord is our God, and he is become our salvation. I trusted on thee, O Lord, I said*

said thou art my God, Psal. xxxi. 14. *The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my strength, in whom I will trust.* Psal. xviii. 2. *Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid,* Isa. xii. 2. *O my soul hope thou in God, who is the health of my countenance and my God,* Psal. xlii. 11. *True hope is grounded on God only, that he will bless us, that it may be an anchor for the soul, sure and stedfast,* Heb. vi. 17. 18, 19. If you trust, rely, and stay yourselves on Christ, or hope in him, without assuring your selves at all of salvation by him, you make no better use of him, than if he were a broken reed; and if you would stay yourselves on the Lord, you must look on him as your God, as the prophet teacheth, *Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God,* Isa. l. 10. If you will rest in the Lord you must believe that he dealeth bountifully with you, *Psal. cxvi. 7.* or else for ought you know you may make your bed in hell; and you will shew little regard of Christ and of your own soul, if you dare to rest under the wrath of God without any persuation of a sure interest in Christ. People may please themselves with such a trusting or resting, &c. when they are at ease, but in time of temptation it vanisheth away, and appeareth to be no true faith, but is turned into shame. The soul that liveth in such wavering and doubting concerning salvation, doth not stay itself nor rest at all, but is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind, and tossed, *he is a double minded man, unstable in all his ways,* Ja. i. 6. If you continue

tinue in mean suspense and doubtfulness of salvation by Christ, your desire to trust, is but a lazy wouling without any fixed resolution, and you dare not yet venture to trust on him stedfastly. If you call it only your desire to trust and rely on Jesus Christ, I may answer that you cannot do thus much in a right manner except you desire and venture to persuade and assure your selves of your salvation by Christ, notwithstanding all the causes that you have to doubt and fear the contrary. If it be objected that we may trust on Christ only as a sufficient means of salvation, without any assurance of the effect. I shall acknowledge that the sufficiency of God and Christ is a good ground for us to rest on, but we must understand by it, not only a sufficiency of power but also of good will and mercy towards us: For what have we to do more with the sufficiency of God's and Christ's power than fallen angels, without his good-will towards us? And if this be truly believed, it will exclude doubtfulness concerning your salvation.

Secondly, Several places of scripture declare positively and expressly, that we are to be assured of our salvation in that faith, whereby we are justified and saved. I shall produce some Instances. We are exhorted, *to draw near to God with full assurance of faith*, Heb. x. 22. Many apply this text to that which they call, the reflex act of faith, because they imagine that all assurance must needs be by reflection; but the words of the text do clearly teach us to understand it of that act of faith, whereby we draw near to God, that is the direct act, and it is that very faith whereby

whereby the just do live, even justifying, saving faith, *ver.* 38. And this assurance must be full, at least in the true and proper nature of it, in opposition unto mere doubtfulness and uncertainty, though we are yet further to labour for that which is full in the highest degree of perfection. And the same faith whereby we are exhorted to draw nigh unto God, and whereby the just liveth, is a little after, *Chap.* xi. 1. affirmed to be *the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.* Why should saving faith have these high titles and attributes given to it, if it did not contain in it a sure perswasion of the great things of our salvation hoped for, which maketh them to be evident to the eyes of our mind, as if they were already present in their substance, though yet not visible to our bodily eyes; that faith whereby we are made partakers of Christ, and to be Christ's house, must be worthy to be called confidence, and accompanied with rejoicing hope. *Whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end,* Heb. iii. 6, 14. What is confidence concerning any thing, but trusting concerning it, with a firm perswasion of the truth of it? If we have only a strong opinion concerning a thing, without any absolute certainty, we use to say that we are not altogether confident of it. The faith whereby we are justified, must be in a measure like to the faith whereby *Abraham* against hope believed in hope, that his seed should certainly be multiplied according to the promise of God, though by reason of the deadness of his own body, and of *Sarah's* womb, he could have no evidence

vidence from his own qualifications to assure himself of it, but all appearances were rather to the contrary, as the apostle teacheth clearly, *Rom. iv. 18, 19, 23, 24.* As absolute as his promise was, thus was made to *Abraham*, yet it was not to be fulfilled without this assurance of faith; and by the like faith the free promises of salvation by Christ, will be absolutely fulfilled to us. The apostle *James* expressly requireth that we should ask good things of God in faith, nothing doubting, which includeth assurance manifestly; and he tells us plainly, that without it a man ought not to think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord; therefore we may firmly conclude, that without it we shall not receive the salvation of Christ, *James i. 6, 7.* And that which the apostle *James* requireth us not to doubt of, is the obtaining the things that we ask, as we may learn from an instruction to the same purpose given to us by Christ himself, *What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them, Mark xi. 24.* More places of scripture might be alleged to the same purpose; but these are sufficient to evince that we are bound to assure ourselves of our salvation in faith it self, or else we are never likely to enjoy it, and that it is not humility, but rather proud disobedience to live in a state of mere suspense and doubtfulness concerning our salvation, and that this assurance must be in the direct act of faith whereby we are justified and saved: For as for that which is called the reflex act of faith, it is a certain truth and generally owned, that it is not absolutely

lutely necessary to salvation to any, and that it is sinful and pernicious to many to believe that they are already entred into a state of grace and salvation.

Thirdly, God giveth us sufficient ground in scripture to come to Christ with confident faith, at the very first, trusting assuredly that Christ and his salvation shall be given to us without any failing and delay, however vile and sinful our condition hath been hitherto. The scripture speaketh to the vilest sinners in such a manner as if it were framed on purpose to beget assurance of salvation in them immediately, *Acts ii. 39. chap. iii. 26.* This Promise is universal, that whosoever believeth on Christ shall not be ashamed, without making a difference between Jew and Greek, *Rom. x. 11, 12.* And this promise is confirmed by the blood of Christ, who was given for the world, and lifted up upon the cross for this very end, that *whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life*, *John iii. 14, 15, 16.* His invitation is free to any, *If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink*, and this drink is promised to every one that believeth, *John vii. 37, 29.* The command of believing is propounded not only in general, but in particular, and the promise of salvation upon believing, is also applied personally; and that to such as have been hitherto in a state of sin and wrath; as to the wicked persecuting self-murdering jaylor, *Acts xvi. 31. Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved and thine house.* God commanded them that walked altogether in sin hitherto, to call him their own father

father in their very first returning, *Jer. iii. 4.* So *Hos. ii. 23.* God saith, he will say, *Thou art my people, and they shall say, Thou art my God,* confidently averring their personal interest in him. God hath joined confidence and salvation inseparably together. *In returning and rest ye shall be saved, in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength, Isa. xxx. 15.* What a poor slender use and improvement do many make of these discoveries of the rich grace of God towards sinners, who say that if we see that we have performed the condition of believing, then we may take Christ confidently as our own; they skip over the first and principal use they ought to make of them; the very performance of the condition is to take Christ as our own immediately, and to eat him and drink him, by believing confidently on him for our salvation. If an honest rich man say to a poor woman, I promise to be thy husband if thou wilt have me, say but the word and I am thine; may not she presently answer confidently, Then thou art my husband, and I claim thee for my husband? And shall she not rather say so, than say, I believe not what thou sayest? If an honest man say, Do but take this gift, and it is your own, do but eat and drink and you are freely welcome, may not I take the gift, and eat and drink at first without any further ado, and with assurance that it is mine freely? If I do it doubtfully, I disparage the honesty and credit of the donor, as if he were not a man of his word. In like manner, if, fearing to be too confident, lest we should believe a lie, we should come to
Christ

Christ doubtingly, and in mere suspense, whether we shall be freely entertained after all God's free Invitations and promises, should we not disparage the faithfulness of God and should we not be guilty of making God a liar; as the apostle *John* teacheth, because of our not believing the record which God gave of his Son, and *this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son*; 1 John v. 10, 11. And what if the salvation promised be not absolutely intended for all to whom the gospel cometh? It is enough that God giveth us his faithful word, that they that believe it shall have it and none else, and hath absolutely intended to fulfill his word, that none shall find it to be a lie to them, and hath joined believing and salvation together inseparably. On this ground God may justly cause the promise of this salvation to be published to all, and may justly require all to believe on him assuredly for their own salvation, that so it may appear whether they will give him the glory of his truth, and if they will not, he may justly reject them, and punish them severely for dishonouring him by their unbelief: In this case we must not look to the secret decrees of God, but to his revealed promises and command. Thus God promised to the *Israelites* in the wilderness, that he would give them the land of *Canaan*, and would fight for them against their enemies, and required them not to fear or be discouraged, that so the promise might be fulfilled to them, yet God never absolutely decreed or intended that those *Israelites* should enter

enter in, as the event did quickly manifest, *Deut.* i. 20, 21. 29, 30. Yet were they not bound in this case to trust confidently in God to give them victory over their enemies, and to give them the possession of the land? Had they not sufficient ground for such a faith? Was it not just with God to consume them in the wilderness for their unbelief? Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being made of entering into this everlasting rest through Christ, we should come short of it, and fall after the same example of unbelief, *Heb.* iv. 1, 11.

Fourthly, The professors of true godliness that we read of through the scripture of the Old and New Testament did commonly profess their assurance and perswasion of their interest in God and his salvation, and were directed by the word of God so to do, and true saints had still some true assurance of it, and we have no cause to judge that this assurance was grounded on the certainty of their own good qualifications, but rather on the promises of God by the direct act of faith. We may judge of the ordinary profession of the frame of spirit that was in saints, by some instances. I shall begin with the profession that the church made when it was very corrupt, at its first coming out of *Egypt*, when few of them could assure themselves by their own good qualifications that they were in a state of grace already, which many now imagine to be the only way of assurance. Even in that corrupt time the children of *Israel* sung that triumphant song of *Moses*, *the Lord is my strength and my song, and he is become my sal-*

vation

varion, *be is my God, &c. Exod. xv. 2. Moses* taught them in this song to assure themselves of their own personal interest in the salvation, and he guided them to the practice of their duty, and they did not find fault with *Moses* as some do with ministers in these days, for putting them to express more confidence in their song than they could find ground for in their qualifications, but they applied themselves to the exercise of their faith agreeably to their song, and doubtless this faith was unfeigned in some few of them, though but feigned in others, for it is testified of them, that then they believed his words, they sang his praise, *Psal. cvi. 12.* Several other psalms and songs that were by divine appointment in common use under the Old Testament, are as clear an evidence as we can desire of that assurance of faith which was commonly professed, and that people were generally bound to, under the Old Testament, as *Psal. xxiii. and xxvii. and xlv.* Many other psalms or expressions in psalms might be alledged. The spirits of few in comparison, could have thoroughly complied with such psalms, though they were true believers, if all the assurance of the love of God must altogether depend upon the certain knowledge of the sincerity of their own hearts. We have a great cloud of witnesses gathered out of the whole history of the Old Testament, *Heb. xi.* who did, and suffered, and obtained great things by faith, whose examples are produced on purpose that we may follow them in believing to the saving of our souls, *Heb. x. 39.* And if we consider these ex-

N

amples

amples particularly, we shall find that many of them do evidently guide us to such a saving faith, as hath an assurance of the effect contained in the nature of it. I confess we read several times of the fears and doubtings of the saints under the Old Testament; but we read also how their faith opposed such fears and doubts, and how they themselves condemned them as contrary to faith, as in the psalms, *Psal.* xlii. 11. *Psal.* xxxi. 22. and lxxvii. 7, 10. The most mournful psalm in scripture begins with an expression of some assurance, *Psal.* lxxxviii. 1. And we may note that the doubtings that we meet with of the saints of old, were commonly occasioned by some extraordinary affliction, or some hainous transgression, not by common failings, or the common original deprivation of nature, or the uncertainty of their election, or any thought that it is humility to doubt, and that they were not bound to be confident of God's salvation, because then many might be bound to believe a lie. It is hard to find any of these occasions of doubting under the Old Testament, though they are grown so rife among us now under the New Testament.

In the time of the apostles we may well expect that the assurance of faith grew higher, because the salvation of Christ was revealed, and the spirit of adoption poured forth plentifully, and the Church made free from its former bondage under the terrifying legal covenant. *Paul* could prove to primitive Christians, by appeals to their own experience, that they were the children and heirs of God, because they had

not

not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, *Abba, father, the spirit it self bearing witness with our spirits,* (or beareth our spirits witness as the *Syriack*, and vulgar *Latin* render it; and as the like *Greek* phrase is rendred, *Rom. ix. 1.) that we are the children of God,* and if children then heirs, *Rom. viii. 15, 16. Gal. iv. 6.* And the apostle tells the *Ephe- sians*, that after they believed, they were sealed with the holy spirit, which was the earnest of their inheritance, *Eph. i. 13, 14. i. e.* They were sealed from the same time that they believed, for the original words are in the same tense. If this witness, seal and earnest of the spirit had not been ordinary to believers, it would not have been sufficient to prove that they were the children of God, and such manner of arguing might have driven some to despair, that wanted this witness, seal and earnest.

Let us enquire now whether the spirit beareth witness that we are the children of God, and enables us to cry, *Abba, Father*, by the direct act, or by that which they call the reflex act of faith? For we must not think that it is done by an *Enthusiasm*, without any ordinary means; nor can we reasonably imagine, that no true believers can call God Father, by the guidance of the spirit, but only those few that are so sure of their own sincerity, that by reflecting upon it, they can ground an act of faith concerning their own interest in Christ, no surely. Therefore we may judge rather that spirit worketh this in us by giving us saving faith it self,

self, by the direct act of which all true believers are enabled to trust assuredly on Christ for the enjoyment of the adoption of children and all his salvation, according to the free promise of God, and to call God Father, without reflecting on any good qualification in themselves. For the spirit is received by the direct act of faith, *Gal. iii. 2.* And so he is the spirit of adoption, and comfort to all that receive him. They that assert that the spirit witnesseth our adoption, only by assuring us of the sincerity of our faith, love, and other gracious qualifications, and by the reflex act of faith, do teach also commonly, that you must again try whether the spirit thus witnessing, be the spirit of truth, or of delusion, by searching narrowly whether our inward grace be sincere or counterfeit, so that hereby the testimony of the spirit is rendred so hard to be discerned, that it standeth us in no stead, but all our assurance is made at last to depend on our own certain knowledge of our own sincerity. There are several other evidences to shew, that believers generally were perswaded of their Salvation in the apostles times: They loved and waited for the coming of Christ to judge the world, *1 Cor. i. 7. 2 Tim. iv. 8.* They loved all the saints for the hope that was laid up for them in heaven, *Col. i. 3, 4.* The *Corinthians* that were very carnal, and but babes in Christ, were perswaded that they should judge the world, and angels, and that their bodies were members of Christ; and the temples of the Holy Ghost, *1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. 15. 19.* The very first coming of the gospel to the *Thes.*

Calcedonians

Salonians, was in the Holy Ghost, and much assurance, so that they received it with much affliction with joy of the Holy Ghost, when as yet they had no considerable time to get assurance, by reflecting on their good qualifications, *1 Thess. i. 5, 6*. Likewise the believing *Hebrews*, when they were illuminated at their first conversion, took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing that they had in heaven a better, and an enduring substance, and this was their confidence, which they were not to cast off, because the just liveth by faith, and therefore it appeareth that this confidence belongeth necessarily to justifying, saving faith, *Heb. x. 32, 34, 35, 38*.

Now let those that alledge the examples or experiences of many modern Christians to disprove all that I have asserted, consider well whether these are fit to be laid in the ballance against all the scripture examples and experiences that I have produced out of the old and new testament. I confess that assurance of salvation is more rarely professed by christians in these times than formerly, and we may thank some teachers for it, that have deserted the doctrine of former *Protestants* in this point, and vented against it several errors, such as have been already named, and now would take advantage to confirm the truth of their doctrines from those doubtings in christians, that have been chiefly occasioned by it. But however the nature of saving faith is still the same, and I assert that in those days as well as formerly, it always hath in it some assurance of salvation by

Christ, which doth and will appear, at least in resisting and condemning all doubtings, and praying against them, and endeavouring to trust assuredly, and to call God Father, except in extraordinary desertions, by which our case must not be tried. We are not to trust the judgment of many concerning themselves; they will judge falsely, that they have no assurance at all, because they know not yet by marks and signs that are in a state of grace already, or because they think that there is no assurance when there are many doubtings, and because it is so weak and so much oppressed with doubting, that it can hardly be discerned, as life in a fainting fit; but if their judgments be better informed, they may be brought to discern some assurance in themselves: We are also to take heed of mistaking those for true believers that are not so, and of judging this point by their experiences, which is a vulgar error. The blind charity of some moveth them to take all for true believers, who are full of doubts and troubles concerning their salvation, though it may be they only are convinced of sin, and brought to some zeal of God that is not according to the knowledge of the way of salvation by Christ, and they think it duty to comfort such ignorant persons, by perswading them that their state is good, and their faith right, though they have no assurance of salvation. Thus they are brought to judge falsely concerning the nature of faith out of their blind charity to such as are yet in ignorance and unbelief, and instead of comforting such, they rather take the direct way to harden

harden them in their natural state, and to divert them from seeking consolation by saving faith in Christ, and to ruine their souls for ever.

Fifthly, The chief office of this faith in its direct saving act, is to receive Christ and his salvation actually into our hearts, as hath been proved, which office cannot be rationally performed, except we do, in some measure, persuade our hearts, and assure our selves of the enjoyment of him. As the body receiveth things into it self by the hands and mouth : So the soul receiveth these things to it self, and layeth actual hold on them by the faculty of the will, making choice of them and embracing them in a way of present enjoyment and possession, as it doth by the faculty of the understanding see and apprehend them; thus the soul receiveth comfort from outward things. As a righteous person cannot receive inward comfort from outward things, as from worldly estate, wife, husband, friends, &c. except he chuse them as good and count them his own by a right and title. This is the only rational way whereby the soul can actively lay hold on Christ, and take actual possession of him and his salvation, as he is freely offered and promised to us in the gospel, by the grace of faith, which God hath appointed to be our great instrument for the receiving of him, and closing with him. If we do not make choice of Christ as our only salvation and happiness, or if we be altogether in a state of suspense, and doubting whether God will be pleased to give Christ to us or no, it is evident that our souls are quite

loose from Christ, and have no holdfast or enjoyment of him. They do not so much as pretend to any actual receiving, or laying hold or chusing of him, neither are they fully satisfied that it is lawful for them so to do, but rather they are yet to seek whether they have any good ground and right to lay hold on him or no. Let any rational man judge, whether the soul doth, or can put forth any sufficient act for the reception and enjoyment of Christ as its saviour, head, or husband, while it is yet in doubt, whether it be the will of Christ to be joined with it in such a near relation; can a woman honestly receive any one as her husband without being assured that he is fully willing to be her husband? The same may be said concerning the several parts of Christ's salvation which are to be received by faith. It is evident that we do not aright receive the benefit of remission of sins, for the purging of our consciences from that guilt that lieth upon them, unless we have an assured persuasion of God's forgiving them; we do not actually receive into our hearts our reconciliation with God, and adoption of children, and the title to an everlasting inheritance, until we can assure our selves that God is graciously pleased to be our God and father, and take us to be his children and heirs. We do not actually receive any sufficient strength to encourage our hearts to holiness in all difficulties, until we can steadfastly believe that God is with us, and will not fail nor forsake us.

Hence then we may firmly conclude, that who-so seeketh to be saved by faith, and doth not seek

to have assurance or confidence of his own salvation doth but deceive himself, and delude his soul with a mere fancy instead of saving faith, and doth in effect seek to be saved in his corrupt natural state, without receiving and laying actual hold of the Lord Jesus Christ and his salvation.

Sixthly, It is also a great and necessary office of saving faith, to purify the heart, and to enable us to live and walk in the practice of all holy duties, by the grace of Christ, and by Christ himself living in us, as hath been shewed before, which office faith is not able to perform, except some assurance of our own interest in Christ and his salvation be comprehended in the nature of it. If we would live to God, not our selves, but by Christ living in us, according *Paul's* example, we must be able to assure our selves, as he did, *Christ loved me, and gave himself for me, Gal. ii. 20.* We are taught, that *if we live in the spirit, we shall walk in the spirit, Gal. v. 25.* It would be high presumption if we should endeavour to walk above our natural strength and power by the spirit, before we have made sure of our living by the spirit. I have shewed that we cannot make use of the comfortable benefit of the saving grace of Christ, whereby the gospel doth engage and encourage us to an holy practice, except we have some confidence of our own interest in these saving benefits. If we do not assuredly believe that we are dead to sin, and alive to God through Christ, and risen with Christ, and not under the law, but under grace, and members of Christ's body, the temple of his spirit, the dear children of God, it would be hypocrisy

Pocrify to serve God upon the account of such Privileges as if we reckoned our selves to be partakers of them; he that thinks he should doubt of his salvation is not a fit disciple for this manner of doctrine, and he may reply to the preachers of the gospel, if you would bring me to holiness, you must make use of other more effectual arguments, for I cannot practise upon these principles, because I have not faith enough to believe that I have any interest in them, some arguments taken from the justice and wrath of God against sinners, and his mercy towards those that perform the condition of sincere obedience, would work more powerfully upon me. O what a miserable worthless kind of saving faith is this? that cannot fit a believer to practise in a gospel manner upon the most pure and powerful principles of grace, but rather leaveth him to work upon legal principles, which can never bring him to serve God acceptably out of love. And as such a faith faileth wholly in the right manner of obeying upon gospel principles, so it faileth also in the very matter of some great duties, which are of such a nature that they include assurance of God's love in the right performance of them; such are those great duties of peace with God, rejoicing in the Lord always, hope that maketh not ashamed, owning the Lord as our God and our saviour, praying to him as our father in heaven, offering up body and soul as an acceptable sacrifice to him, casting all our cares of body and soul upon him, contentment and hearty thanksgiving in every condition, making our boast in the Lord, triumphing in his praise
rejoicing

rejoicing in tribulation, putting on Christ in our baptism, receiving Christ's body as broken for us, and his blood as shed for us in the Lord's supper, committing our souls willingly to God as our redeemer when ever he shall be pleased to call for us, loving Christ's second appearance, and looking for it as that blessed hope. When we fall into any sudden doubting whether we are in a state of grace already; when we are called to any present undertaking, as to partake of the Lord's supper, or any duty that requires assurance, to the right performance of it; we must relieve our selves by trusting confidently in Christ for the present gift of our salvation, or else we shall be driven to omit the duty, or not to perform it rightly or sincerely; can we judge our selves already in a state of grace by the reflex act of faith, if we do not find that we perform these duties, at least several of them sincerely, or if we do not find that we have such a holy faith as doth enable or incline us to the performance of them? And can we be thus enabled and inclined by any faith that is without some true assurance of our salvation? Therefore I conclude that we must necessarily have some assurance of our salvation in the direct act of faith, whereby we are justified, sanctified, and saved, before we can upon any good ground assure our selves that we are already in a state of salvation by that which they call the reflex act. Give me such a saving faith as will produce such fruits as these. No other faith will work by love, and therefore will not avail to salvation in Christ, *Gal. v. 6.* The apostle *James* putteth
theo

thee upon shewing thy faith by thy works, *James* ii. 18. And in this trial this faith of assurance cometh off with high praise and honour: When God calleth his people to work outward miracles by it, all things have been possible to them, and it hath frequently brought forth such works of righteousness, as may be deservedly esteemed great spiritual miracles; from hence hath proceeded that heroick fortitude of the people of God; whereby their absolute obedience to God hath shined forth in doing and suffering those great things which are recorded in the holy scriptures and in the histories of the church. And if we be ever called to the fiery trial, as *Protestants* formerly were, we shall find their doctrine of assurance will encourage us in suffering for the sake of Christ.

Seventhly, The contrary doctrine which excludeth assurance out of the nature of saving faith bringeth forth many evil fruits; it tendeth to bereave our souls of all assurance of our salvation and solid comfort which is the life of religion, by placing them after sincere universal obedience; whereas if we have them not first, we can never attain to this obedience, nor to any assurance that dependeth on it, as hath been proved. And this, as far as it prevails, makes us subject to continual doubtings concerning our salvation, and to tormenting fears of wrath, which casteth out true love to God, and can produce no better than slavish hypocritical service. It is one of the principal pillars whereby manifold superstitions in popery are supported, as their monkish orders, their satisfactions for sin by works

works of penance, bodily macerations, whippings, pilgrimages, indulgences, trusting on the merits of saints, &c. When once men have lost the knowledge or the right way to assure themselves of salvation, they will catch at any straw to avoid drowning in the gulph of despair.

This is no way to administer any solid comfort to the wounded spirits of those that see themselves void of all holiness, under the wrath and curse of God, dead in sin, not able so much as to think a good thought; you do but increase their terror and anguish if you tell them they must first get faith and obedience, and when they find they have done that, they may persuade themselves, that God will receive them into his grace and favour. Alas! they know that they cannot believe nor obey except God prevent them with his grace and favour: And what if they be even at the point of death, struggling with death's pangs, so that they have no time or leisure to get good qualifications, and examine the goodness of them, you must have a more speedy way to comfort such by discovering to them the free promises of salvation to the worst of sinners by faith in Christ, and by exhorting them to apply those promises, and trust on Christ confidently for remissions of sins, holiness and glory, assuring them also that God will help them to believe sincerely on Christ, if they desire it with all their hearts, and that it is their duty to believe, because God commands it.

Several other evils are occasioned by the same doctrine. Men are unwilling to know the worst of themselves, and prone to think their qualifications

cations better than they are, that they may avoid despair; others please and content themselves without any assurance of their interest in Christ, because they think that is not necessary to salvation, and that but few attain to it, and in this they shew little love to Christ, or to their own souls; some foster doubtings of salvation as signs of humility, though they will hypocritically complain of them; many mispend their time in poring upon their own hearts to find out some evidence of their interest in Christ, when they should rather be imployed in receiving Christ, and walking in him by a confident faith.

Some are troubled with doubts whether they should call God Father, and what apprehensions they should have of him in prayer, and are offended at ministers, that in their publick prayers use any expressions that the people cannot join in, as when they do own God as their God and Father, and Christ as their Saviour; and upon the same account they are offended at the publick singing of many of *David's* psalms, and avoid partaking of the Lord's supper, because they are not satisfied about their interest in Christ.

Though true believers have some assurance of salvation in saving faith itself, yet it is much weakned in many by this contrary doctrine, and assaulted with many doubtings, and then other good qualifications must needs be low and weak together with it, and so obscure that it is very hard to discern them; how hard a thing then will it be for true believers to assure themselves, by
the

the certain knowledge of their own sincerity, that they are in a state of grace already, which some say is the only assurance of faith? Some prescribe such marks and signs to distinguish sincerity from hypocrisy that believers cannot sufficiently try themselves by them; except they have more knowledge and experience than ordinary.

Thus many believers walk heavily in the bitterness of their souls, conflicting with fears and doubtings all their days, and this is the cause that they have so little courage and fervency of spirit in the ways of God, and that they so much mind earthly things, and are so afraid of sufferings and death. And if they get some assurance by the reflect act of faith, they often soon lose it again by sins and temptations. The way to avoid these evils is to get your assurance, and to maintain it, and renew it upon all occasions by the direct act of faith, by trusting assuredly on the name of the Lord, and staying your self upon your God, when you walk in darkness and see no light in any of your own qualifications, *Isa. l. 10.* I doubt not but the experience of many choice Christians will bear witness to this truth.

D I R E C T I O N XI.

Endeavour diligently to perform the great work of believing on Christ, in a right manner, without any delay, and then also to continue and increase in your most holy faith; that so your enjoyment of Christ, union and fellowship with him, and all holiness by him, may be begun, continued, and increased in you.

E X P L I C A T I O N.

HAVING already discovered to you the powerful and effectual *means* of an holy practice, my remaining work is to lead you to the actual *exercise and improvement* of them, for the immediate attainment of the end. And I think it may be clearly perceived by the foregoing directions, that *faith in Christ* is the duty with which a holy life is to begin, and by which the foundation of all other holy duties is laid in the soul. It is before sufficiently proved, that Christ himself, with all endowments necessary to enable us to an holy practice, is received actually into our hearts by *faith*. This is the uniting grace, whereby the spirit of God knitteth the knot of mystical marriage between Christ and us, and maketh us branches of that noble vine, members of that body joined to that excellent head, living stones of the spiritual temple, built upon the precious living corner-stone and sure foundation; partakers of the bread and drink that came down from heaven and giveth
life

life to the world. This is the grace whereby we pass from our corrupt *natural* state, to a *new holy state* in Christ, also from *death* in sin to the *life* of righteousness, and whereby we are comforted, that so we may be established in every good word and work. If we put the question, what must we do that we may work the works of God? Christ resolveth it, that we *believe on him whom he hath sent*, Joh. vi 28, 29. He putteth us *first* upon the work of believing, which is the work of God by way of eminence, the work of works, because all other good works proceed from it.

The first thing in the present *direction*, is to *put you upon the performance* of this great work of believing on Christ, and to *guide you* therein: For, you are to consider distinctly, *four* things contained in it.

I. The first is you are to *make it your diligent endeavour* to perform the great work of *believing* on Christ. Many make little conscience of this duty. It is not known by natural light, as many moral duties are, but only by supernatural revelation in the Gospel, and it is foolishness to the natural man. These are sometimes terrified with apprehensions of other sins, and will examine themselves concerning them; and it may be, will write them down to help their memories and devotion: But the *great sin* of *not believing* on Christ, is seldom thought of in their self-examinations, or registered in the large catalogues of their sins; and even those who are convinced, that believing on Christ is a duty necessary to salvation, do neglect all diligent

ligent endeavours to perform it. Either because they account, that it is a motion of the heart which may be easily performed at any time, without any labour or diligent endeavour; or on the contrary, because they account it as difficult as all the works of the law, and utterly impossible for them to perform by their most diligent endeavours, except the spirit of God work it in them by his mighty power: And that therefore it is in vain for them to work, until they feel this working of the spirit in their hearts: Or because they count it a duty so peculiar to the elect, that it would be presumption for them to endeavour the performance of it, until they know themselves to be elected to eternal life through Christ. I shall urge you to a diligent performance of this duty, notwithstanding of all these impediments, by the following consideration: It is worthy of our best endeavours, as appeareth by the preciousness, excellency and necessity of it already discovered.

If the light of nature were not darkned in the matters of salvation, it would shew us, that we cannot of our selves find out the way of salvation, and would condemn those that despise that revelation of the way of salvation that God hath given us in the gospel, declared in the holy scriptures. The great end of preaching the gospel, is for the obedience of faith, *Rom. i. 5.* that so we may be brought to Christ, and all other obedience; yea, the great end of all revealed doctrines in the whole scripture, is to make us wise to salvation by faith, that is in Christ Jesus, *2 Tim. iii. 15.* The end of the law given by

by *Moses* was for righteousness to every one that believeth, *Rom. x. 4.* and Christ was that end for righteousness. The moral law it self was revealed in order to our salvation by believing on Christ or else the knowledge of it had nothing availed fallen man, that was unable to perform it. Therefore they that slight the duty of believing, and count it foolishness, do thereby slight, despise, and vilifie the whole counsel of God revealed in the scripture: The law and the gospel, and Christ himself are become of none effect to the salvation of such; the only fruit that such an one can attain to, by all the saving doctrines of the scripture, is only some hypocritical moral duties and slavish performances, which will be as filthy rags in the sight of God in the great day. However many mind not the sin of unbelief in their self examinations, and write it not in their scrouls; yet let them know, that this is the most pernicious sin of all: All the sins in their scrouls would not prevail to their condemnation; yea, they would not prevail in their conversation, were it not for their unbelief; this one sin prevailing, maketh it impossible for them to please God in any duty whatsoever, *Heb. xi. 6.* If you will not mind this one main sin now, God will at last mind you of it with a vengeance: For, *he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him, John iii. 36.* The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, *2 Thes. i. 8.*

2. Believing on Christ, is a work that will require diligent endeavour and labour for the performance of it: we must labour to enter into that rest, *lest any man fall by unbelief*, Heb. iv. 11. *we must shew diligence to the full assurance of hope to the end, that we may be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises*, Heb. vi. 11, 12. It is a work that requireth the exercise of might and power, and therefore we have need to *be strengthened with might by the spirit in the inward man, that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith*, Eph. iii. 16, 17. I confess it is easie, pleasant and delicious in its own nature, because it is a motion of the heart without any cumbersome bodily labour; and it is a taking Christ and his salvation as our own, which is very comfortable and delightful; and the soul is carried forth in this by love to Christ and its own happiness, which is an affection that maketh even hard works easie and pleasant; yet it is made difficult to us, by reason of the opposition that it meets with from our own inward corruptions, and from satan's temptations. It is no easie matter to receive Christ as our happiness and free salvation, with true confidence and lively affection, when the guilt of sin lieth heavily upon the conscience, and the wrath of God is manifested by the word, and terrible judgments; especially when we have been long accustomed to seek salvation by the procurement of our own works; and to account the way of salvation by free grace foolish and pernicious; when our lusts incline us strongly to the things of the flesh and the world.

world, when satan doth his utmost by his own suggestions, and by false teachers, and by worldly allurements and terrors to hinder the sincere performance of this duty. Many works that are easie in their own nature, prove difficult for us to perform in our circumstances: To forgive our enemies, and to love them as our selves, is but a motion of the mind, easie to be performed in its own nature; and yet many that are convinced of their duty, find it a hard matter to bring their hearts to the performance of it: It is but a motion of the mind to cast our care upon God for wordly things, and rich men may think they can do it easily; but poor men that have great families find it a hard matter. That easie comfortable duty which *Moses* exhorteth the *Israelites* to, when *Pharaoh* with his chariots and horse-men overtook them at the red sea, *be ye not afraid, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew you this day*, *Exod. xiv. 13.* was not easily performed. The very easiness of some duties makes their performance difficult, as *Naaman the Assyrian* was hardly brought to wash and be clean, because he thought it to be too slight and easie a remedy for the cure of his leprosie, *2 Kings v. 12, 13.* Even in this very case, people are offended at the duty of believing on Christ as too slight and easie a remedy to cure the leprosie of the soul, they would have some harder thing enjoined them to the attainment of so great an end as this everlasting salvation. The performance of all the moral law, is not accounted work enough for this end, *Matth.*

xix. 17, 20. However easy the work of believing seemeth to many, yet common experience hath shewed, that men are more easily brought to the most burdensome, unreasonable, and inhumane observations, as the *Jews* and christian *Galatians* were more easily brought to take upon their necks the yoke of *Moses* law, which none were able to bear, *Acts* xv. 10. The heathens were more easily brought to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods, *Deut.* xii. 31. The papists are brought more easily to their vows of chastity and poverty, and obedience to the most rigorous rules of monastick discipline, to macerate and torture their bodies with fastings, scourgings, and pilgrimages, and to bear all the excessive tyranny of the papal hierarchy, in a multitude of burdensome superstitious and ridiculous devotions. They that slight the work of faith for its easiness, shew that they were never yet made sensible of innumerable sins, and that the terrible curse of the law, and wrath of God that they ly under; and of the darkness and vanity of their minds, the corruption and hardness of their hearts, and their bondage under the power of sin and satan, and have not been truly humbled, without which they can't believe in a right manner. Many sound believers have found by experience, that it hath been a very hard matter to bring their hearts to the duty of believing; it hath cost them vigorous struggles, and sharp conflicts with their own corruptions, and satan's temptations. It is so difficult a work, that we can't perform it without the mighty working of
the

the spirit of God in our hearts, who only can make it to be absolutely easie to us, and doth make it easie, or suffer it to be difficult, according as he is pleased to communicate his grace in various degrees unto our souls.

3. Tho' we cannot possibly perform this great work in a right manner, until the spirit of God work faith in our hearts by his mighty power, yet it is necessary that we should endeavour it; and that before we can find the spirit of God working faith effectually in us, or giving strength to believe. We can perform no holy duty acceptably, except the spirit of God work it in us; and yet we are not hereby excused from working our selves, but we are the rather stirred up to the greater diligence; *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure*, Phil. ii. 12, 13. The way whereby the spirit works faith in the elect, is by stirring them up to endeavour to believe, and this is a way suitable to the means that the spirit useth *i. e.* the exhortations, commands and invitations of the gospel, which would be of no force, if we were not to obey them, until we find faith already wrought in us. Neither can we possibly find, that the spirit of God doth effectually work faith, or give strength to believe, until we act it; for which end all inward graces, as well as all other inward habits, are discerned by their acts, as seed in the ground by its springing. We cannot see any such thing as love to God or man in our hearts before we act it; children know not
O 4 their

their ability to stand upon their feet until they have made trial, by endeavouring so to do; so we know not our spiritual strength, until we have learned by experience from the use and exercise of it; neither can we know, or assure our selves absolutely, that the spirit of God will give us strength to believe before we act faith; for such a knowledge and assurance if it be right, is saving faith it self in part; and whosoever trusteth on Christ assuredly for strength to believe by his spirit, doth in effect trust on Christ for his own salvation, which is inseparably joined with the grace of saving faith. Tho' the spirit worketh other duties in us by faith, yet he worketh faith in us immediately by hearing, knowing and understanding the word; *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*, Rom. x. 17. And in the word he makes no absolute promise or declaration, that he will work faith in this or that unbelieving heart, or that he will give strength to believe to any one in particular, or begin the work of believing in Christ; for faith it self is the first grace whereby we have a particular interest in any saving promise. It is a thing hidden in the secret counsel and purpose of God concerning us, whether he will give us his spirit and saving faith until our election be discovered by our believing actually. Therefore as soon as we know the duty of believing, we are to apply our selves immediately to the vigorous performance of the duty, and in so doing, we shall find that the spirit of Christ hath strengthened us to believe, tho' we know
not

not certainly that he will do it before-hand. The spirit cometh undiscernably upon the elect, to work faith within them, like the wind that bloweth where it lists, and none knoweth whence it cometh, and whither it goeth, but only we hear the sound of it, and thereby know it when it is past and gone, *Joh. iii. 8.* we must therefore begin the work, before we know that the spirit doth or will work in us savingly: And we shall be willing to set upon the work if we be Christ's people; *for thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power,* Psal. cx.

3. It is enough that God discovereth to us before hand in the Gospel what faith is, and the ground we have to believe on Christ for our own salvation; and that God requireth this duty of us and will help us in the performance of it, if we apply our selves heartily thereunto: *Fear not, I command thee to be strong, and of good courage,* Josh. i. 6. *Arise and be doing, and the Lord will be with thee,* 1 Chron. xxii. 16. Therefore who so receiveth this gospel discovery as the word of God in hearty love, is taught by the spirit, and will certainly come to Christ by believing, *John vi. 45.* Every one that receiveth it not, despiseth God, maketh him a liar, and deserveth justly to perish for his unbelief.

4. Tho' the spirit worketh saving faith only in the elect, and others believe not, because they are not of Christ's sheep, *John x. 26.* and on that account 'tis called the *faith of God's elect*, Tit. i. 1. yet all that hear the gospel are obliged to the duty of believing, as well as to all the duties of the moral law, and that before they know their own particular election; and

and they are lyable to condemnation for unbelief, as well as for any other sin: *He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God, John iii. 18.* The apostle Paul sheweth, that the elect *Isralites* obtained salvation, and the rest that were not elected were blinded, and yet even these were broken off from the good Olive-tree because of their unbelief, *Rom. xi. 7. 20.* We cannot have a certain knowledge of our election to eternal life before we do believe; it is a thing hidden in the unsearchable counsel of God, until it be manifest by our effectual calling and believing on Christ. The apostle knew the election of the *Thessalonians*, by finding the evidence of their faith, that the gospel came to them, not in *Word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance*; and that they had *received the word in much affliction, with joy in the Holy Ghost, 1 Thes. i. 4, 5, 6.* We are to see our calling, if we would find out that God hath chosen us, *1 Cor. i. 26, 27.* therefore we must believe on Christ before we know our election, or else we shall never know it, and shall never believe; and it is no presumption for us to trust confidently on Christ for everlasting life, before we have any good evidence of our election, because God that cannot lie, hath made a general promise, *That whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed, without making the least difference among them that perform this duty, Rom. x. 11, 12.* The promise is as firm and sure to be fulfilled, as any

any of God's decrees and purposes ; and therefore it is a good and sufficient ground for our confidence. It is certain, that all that the Father hath given to Christ by the decree of eternal election, shall come to Christ. And it is as really certain, that *Christ will in no wise cast out any that cometh to him*, whosoever he be, *John vi. 37.* And we need not fear that we shall infringe God's decree of election, by believing on Christ confidently for our salvation, before we know what God hath decreed concerning us. For if we believe, we shall at last be found among the number of the elect. And if we refuse to believe, we shall thereby wilfully sort our selves among the reprobates, *that stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they are appointed, 1 Pet. ii. 8.* I shall add further, that tho' we have no evidence of our particular election before we believe, yet we are to trust on Christ assuredly, to make it evident to us, by giving us that salvation which is the peculiar portion of the elect only : All spiritual saving blessings wherewith God blesteth his people in Christ, are the peculiar portion of them whom God hath chosen in Christ *before the foundation of the world, Eph. i. 3, 4.* yet we must necessarily trust on Christ for those saving blessings, or have none at all : We are to pray in faith, nothing doubting, that God will remember us with the favour that he beareth to his people, that we may see the good of his chosen, and glory with his inheritance, *Psal. cvi. 4, 5.* therefore we are to trust assuredly on God, that he will deal with us as his chosen people

people : Thus it appeareth, that it is not presumption, but your bounden duty, to apply your selves to the great work of believing on Christ for salvation, without questioning at all before-hand, whether you are elected or no : *Secret things belong to God, but those things that are revealed belong unto us, that we may do them, Deut. xxix. 29.*

The *second* thing directed to, is, that you should endeavour for a *right manner* of performing this duty. This is a point of great concernment, because the want of it will render your faith ineffectual to sanctification and salvation. The great duty of *love*, which is the end of the law, and the principal fruit of sanctification, must flow from *faith unfeigned*, 1 Tim. i. 5. There is a feigned faith that doth not really receive Christ into the heart, and will not produce love or any true obedience; such as *Simon Magus* had, *Acts viii. 13, 23.* for notwithstanding his faith, he was in the *gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity*. And such as those Jews had, to whom Christ would not commit himself, *who did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue*, John ii. 23. and xii. 42. and such as the apostle *James* speaks of, *What doth it profit you, my Brethren, if a man say he have faith, and have not works? Can that faith save him? The Devils also believe and tremble*, James ii. 14, 19. Take heed therefore lest you deceive your souls with a *counterfeit faith*, instead of the *precious* faith of God's elect. The way to distinguish the one from the other, is, by considering well what

what is the *right manner* of that believing which is effectual to salvation: Hypocrites may perform the same works for the *matter*, with true saints; but they are defective in the manner of performance, wherein the excellency of the work doth chiefly consist. One great reason why many *seek to enter in at the strait gate, and are not able*, Luke xiii. 24. is because they are ignorant and defective in the *right manner* of acting this faith whereby they are to enter. Now I confess, that God only is able to guide us effectually in the right way of believing; and we have this great consolation when we see our own folly and proneness to mistake our way, that if we heartily desire and endeavour to believe on Christ aright, we may confidently trust on Christ to guide us. God hath promised that *the wayfaring men tho' fools, shall not err* in the ways of holiness; and that he will teach sinners in the way; *the meek will be guide in judgment, and the meek will be teach his way*, Psal. xxv. 8, 9. and he commandeth them that *lack wisdom, to ask it of God in faith, nothing doubting*, James i. 5, 6. But however, we are to know, that God guideth us only according to the rule of his word; and we must endeavour to learn the right way of believing *out of the word*, or else we are not able so much as to trust rightly on God for guidance and direction in this great work. To help you herein, I have given you before in this treatise, a *description of saving faith*; and have shewed that it containeth *two acts* in it; the one is *believing the truth* of the gospel; the other is *believing*

believing on Christ, as revealed, and freely promised to us in the gospel for all his salvation. Now your great endeavour must be to perform *both* these acts in a right manner, as I shall shew concerning each of them in particular.

In the *first* place, you are highly concerned to endeavour for a *right belief of the truth of the gospel of Christ*; that so you may be well furnished, disposed and encouraged to believe on Christ as revealed and promised in the gospel; hereby you are to remove all discomfortable thoughts and objections of Satan and your own conscience, and to overcome all corrupt inclinations that hinder a chearful embracing of Christ and his salvation. It is found by experience, that when any fail in the second act of faith, the reason of the failing is commonly some defect in this first act. There is some false imagination or other in them, contrary to the belief of the *truth* of the gospel; which is a strong hold of sin and Satan, that must be pulled down before they can receive Christ into their hearts by believing on him. If they knew the *name* of Christ as he is discovered in the gospel, and judged aright of the truth and excellency of it, they would not fail to put their trust in him. And we are in great danger of entertaining such false imaginations, and to account many truths of the gospel strange paradoxes, yea foolish and pernicious, because of our ignorance, self conceitedness, guilty consciences, corrupt affections, and manifold errors wherewith our judgments are prepossessed in matters of salvation; and because Satan laboureth to beguile

us, as he did *Eve*, through his subtilty to corrupt our minds from the simplicity of the gospel that is in Christ, 2 Cor. xi. 3. I shall therefore give you some *particular instructions*, that are of greatest moment to prevent such defects as we are most liable to in the *first* act of our faith.

1. You must believe with a full perswasion, that *you are a child of wrath by nature*, as well as others, fallen from God by the sin of the first *Adam*; dead in trespasses and sins, subject to the curse of the law of God, and to the power of *satan*, and to insupportable misery to all eternity: And that you cannot possibly procure your reconciliation with God, or any spiritual life and strength to do any good work, by any endeavouring to get salvation according to the terms of the legal covenant, and that you cannot find any way to escape out of this sinful and miserable condition by your own reason and understanding, without supernatural revelation, nor be freed from it, except by that infinite power that raiseth the dead. We must not be afraid as some are, to know our own vileness and sinfulness, neither must we be willing to think our selves better than we are, but must be heartily desirous and glad to know the worst of our own condition; yea, when we have found out the worst that we can of our selves, we must be willing to believe that our hearts are deceitful, and desperately wicked, beyond all that we can know and find out, *Jer. xvii. 9.* This is all necessary to work in us true humiliation, self despair, and self loathing, that we may highly esteem, and earnestly

earnestly seek the salvation of Christ, as the one thing necessary. It maketh us sick of sin, and sensible of our need of the great physician, and willing to be ordered according to any of his prescriptions, whatsoever we suffer, rather than to follow our own wisdom, *Mat. ix. 12.* It was for want of this humiliation that the scribes and pharisees were not so forward to enter into the kingdom of heaven, as the publicans and harlots, *Mat. xxi. 31.*

2. You are to believe assuredly, That there is no way to be saved without receiving *all the saving benefits of Christ*, his *spirit* as well as his *merits*, *sanctification* as well as *remission* of sins by faith. It is the ruin of many souls, that they trust on Christ for remission of sins without any regard to holiness, when as these two benefits are inseparably joined in Christ. So that none are freed from condemnation by Christ, but those that are enabled to walk holily, *i. e.* not after *the flesh*, but after *the spirit*, *Rom. viii. 1.* It is also the ruin of souls to seek only remission of sins by faith in Christ, and holiness by our endeavours, according to the terms of the law, whereas we can never live to God in holiness, except we be dead to the law, and live only by Christ living in us by faith: That faith which receiveth not holiness as well as remission of sins from Christ, will never sanctify us, and therefore it will never bring us to heavenly glory, *Heb. xii. 14.*

3. You are to be fully perswaded of the *All-sufficiency of Christ for the salvation of your self*, and of all that believe on him, that his blood
cleanseth

cleanseth from all sin, 1 John i. 7. tho' our sins be never so great and horrible, and continued in never so long, yet he is able to deliver us from the body of death, and mortify our corruptions be they never so strong: We find in scripture, that abominable wicked persons have been saved by him, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, covetous, drunkards, extortioners, &c. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Such as have sinned against the light of nature, as the heathen, and the light of scripture, as the Jews; such as have denied Christ, as *Peter*, and persecuted and blasphemed him, as *Paul*; Many that have fallen into great sins are ruined for ever, because they do not account the grace of Christ sufficient for their pardon and sanctification; when they think they are gone and past all hope of recovery, that their sins are upon them, and they pine away in them, and how shall they live; *Ezek. xxxiii. 10.* This despair works secretly in many souls, without much trouble and horror, and maketh them careless of their souls, and true religion. The devil fills some with horrid, filthy, blasphemous thoughts, on purpose that they may think their sins too great to be forgiven, tho' commonly such thoughts are the least of the sins of those that are pestered with them, and rather the devil's sin than theirs, because they are hurried into them fore against their wills; but if their hearts be somewhat polluted with them, Christ testifieth, that *all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven, except the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost,* Mat. xii. 31. And as for those that are guilty of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, the

P

reason

reason why they are never forgiven, is not because of any want of sufficiency in the blood of Christ, or in the pardoning mercy of God, but because they never repent of that sin, and never seek to God for mercy through Christ, but continue obstinate until death; for the scripture testifieth, *that it is impossible to renew them again by repentance*, Heb. vi. 5, 6. So that the merits of Christ are sufficient for all that seek to him for mercy by believing: There are others that despair of ever getting any victory over their lusts, because they have formerly made many vows and resolutions, and have used many vigorous endeavours against them in vain; such are to persuade themselves, that the grace of Christ is sufficient for them, when all other means have failed; as the woman that had the issue of blood, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse by any remedies that physicians could prescribe; yet persuaded herself, that if she might but touch the cloths of Christ, *she should be whole*, Mark v. 28. Those that despair by reason of the greatness of their guilt and corruption, do greatly dishonour and undervalue the grace of God, his infinite mercy, and the infinite merits of Christ's blood, and power of his spirit, and deserve to perish with *Cain* and *Judas*: Abundance of people that gave up themselves to all licentiousness in this wicked generation lye under secret despair, which maketh them so desperate in swearing, blaspheming, whoring, drunkenness, and all manner of wickedness. How horrid and hainous soever our sins and corruptions have been, we should learn

learn to account them a small matter in comparison to the grace of Christ, who is God as well as man, and offered himself, by the eternal Spirit, as a sacrifice of an infinite value, for our salvation; and can create us anew as easily as he created the world, by a word speaking.

4. You are to be fully persuaded of the truth of the general free promise in your own particular case, that if you believe on Christ sincerely, you shall have everlasting life, as well as any other in the world, without performing any condition of works to procure an interest in Christ: For the promise is universal, *who-soever believeth on him shall not be ashamed*, Rom. ix. 33. without any exception; and if God exclude you not, you must not exclude your selves, but rather conclude peremptorily, that how vile, wicked and unworthy soever you be, yet if you come you shall be accepted as well as any other in the world; you are to believe that great Article of the Creed, the remission of sins in your own case, when you are principally concerned, or else it will little profit you to believe it in the case of others. This is that which hinders many broken wounded spirits from coming to the great physician, when they are convinced of the abominable filthiness of their hearts, that they are dead in sin without the least spark of true grace and holiness in them; they think that it is in vain for such as they are to trust on Christ for salvation, and that Christ will never save such as they are; why so? They can be but lost creatures at worst, and Christ came to seek and save those that are

lost. If they that are dead in sin cannot be saved, then all must despair and perish, for none have any spiritual life, until they receive it by believing on Christ. Some think themselves to be worse than any others; and that none have such wicked hearts as they; and tho' others be accepted, yet they shall be rejected: But they should know that Christ came to save the chief of sinners, 1 *Tim.* i. 15. and that the design of God is to shew the exceeding riches of his grace in our salvation, *Eph.* ii. 7. which is most glorified by pardoning the greatest sinners, and it is but our ignorance to think our selves like no body; for all others, as well as we, are naturally dead in trespasses and sins, their mind is enmity to God, and is not subject to his law, nor can be, *Rom.* viii. 8. and every imagination of the thoughts of their hearts are only evil, and continually so, *Gen.* vi. 5. they have all the same corrupt fountain of all abominations in their hearts, tho' we may have exceeding many others in several actual sins. Others think that they have out stay'd their time, and therefore now they should find no place for repentance, tho' they should seek it carefully with tears, *Heb.* xii. 17. but *Behold, now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation*, 2 *Cor.* vi. 2. even as long as God calleth upon you by the gospel: And altho' *Esau* was rejected, who sought rather the earthly than spiritual blessings of the birth-right, yet they shall not be rejected that seek the enjoyment of Christ and his salvation, as their only happiness. If you come into Christ's vineyard at the

elevenh

eleventh hour of the day, you shall have your penny as well as those that come early in the morning, because the reward is of grace and not of merit, *Mat. xx. 9, 10.* and here you must be sure to believe stedfastly, that Christ and all his salvation is bestowed as a free gift upon those that do not work to procure any right or title to him, or meetness or worthiness to receive him, but only believe on him that justifieth the ungodly, *Rom. iv. 5.* if you put any condition of works or good qualifications between your selves and Christ, it will be a partition wall which you can never climb over.

5. You are to believe assuredly, that *it is the will of God you should believe in Christ*, and have eternal life by him as well as any other; and that your believing is a duty *very acceptable to God*, and that he will help you as well as any other in this work, because he calleth and commandeth you by the gospel to believe in Christ. This maketh us to set chearfully upon the work of believing; as when Jesus commanded the blind man to be called, they said unto him, *Be of good comfort and rise*, he calleth thee, *Mark x. 49.* A command of Christ made *Peter* to walk upon the water, *Mat. xiv.*

29. And here we are not to meddle with God's secret of predestination, or the purpose of his will to give the grace of faith to some rather than others; but only with his revealed will in his gracious invitations and commands, by which we are required to believe on Christ. This will of God is confirmed by his Oath, *As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death*

death of a sinner, but that the wicked turn from his way and live: Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel, Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Christ testifieth, that he would often have gathered the children of Jerusalem as a hen, &c. and they would not, Mat. xxiii. 37. And the apostle Paul testifieth, that God will have all men to be saved, &c. 1 Tim. ii. 4. you are to reject and abandon all thoughts that are contrary to this persuasion. What if few be saved? Thy salvation will not make the number too great; for few will follow thee in the duty of believing. What if the wrath of God be revealed from heaven against thee in many terrible Judgments, and the word and thine own conscience condemn thee; and Christ seem to reckon thee no better than a dog, as he did the woman of Canaan, Mat. xv. 26. Thou art to make a good interpretation of all these things, that the end of them is, to drive thee to Christ, as this was the end of the curses of the law, and all the terrible dispensations of them, Rom. x. 4. If a prophet, or angel from heaven were sent of God on purpose to declare, that the sentence of everlasting damnation is declared against thee, it would be thy duty to believe that God sent him to give thee timely warning, for this very end, that thou mightest believe, and turn to God by faith and repentance. Jeremiah prophesied against the Jews, that God would pluck them up, pull them down, and destroy them for their sins; yet he himself taught them, If they turned from their evil ways, God would

would repent of the evil, Jer. xviii. 7, 8, 11. Jonah preached nothing but certain destruction to Nineveh, to be executed upon them within forty days, chap. iii. 4. yet the intent of that that terrible message was, that those heathenish people might escape destruction by repentance. The most absolute and peremptory denunciations of divine vengeance against us while we are in this world, must be always understood with a secret reserve of salvation for us, upon our faith and repentance. And we are to account that the reason why God doth so terribly denounce his judgment against us by his word is, that we may escape them, by flying for refuge to his free mercy in Christ. Take heed of fostering any thoughts, that God hath absolutely decreed to shew no saving mercy to you, or that you have already committed the unpardonable sin; or that it is in vain for you to attempt the work of believing, because God will not help you in it. If such thoughts prevail in your hearts, they will do you more hurt than the most blasphemous thoughts that terrify you, or any of the grossest abominations that ever you were guilty of; because they obstruct your believing on Christ for salvation. The spirit and the bride say, *come*; Christ saith, *Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely*, Rev. xxii. 17. Therefore we are to abandon all thoughts that hinder our coming to Christ, as very sinful and pernicious, arising in us from our own corruptions, and satan's delusions, and utterly opposite to the mind of Christ, and teachings of the spirit; and what ground can we have to entertain

ertain such unbelieving thoughts? Hath God made us of his privy-council, that we should be able to know that God hath decreed us to damnation before it be manifest by our final unbelief and impenitence? As for the unpardonable sin, it consisteth in renouncing the way of salvation by Christ with the whole heart, after we have attained to the knowledge of it, and are convinced of the truth of it by the gospel. 'Tis the sin that the christian *Hebrews* would have been guilty of, if they had revolted from christianity to the religion of the unbelieving *Jews*, that accounted Christ to be an impostor, and were most rancorous persecutors of him and his ways, *Heb. vi. 4, 5.* They that have committed that sin continue implacable malicious enemies to Christ and his ways to the end, without any repentance: Therefore if you can but find, that you desire seriously to get an interest in Christ, and to be better christians than you are; if you be troubled and grieved that your hearts and lives are so wicked, and that you want faith, love, and true obedience; yea, if your hearts be not maliciously bent to persecute the gospel, and prefer atheism, licentiousness, or any false religion before it, you have no cause to suspect yourselves to be guilty of this unpardonable sin.

6. Add to all these, a full persuasion of the incomparable glorious excellency of Christ, and of the way of salvation by him. You are to esteem the enjoyment of Christ as the only salvation and true happiness, and such an happiness as hath in it unsearcheable riches of glory,
and

and will make our cup to run over with exceeding abundance of peace and joy, and glory to all eternity. We must *account all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord*, &c. Phil. iii. 8. Such a persuasion as this will allure and incline your wills and affections to chuse and embrace Christ as the chief good, and never to rest satisfied without the enjoyment of him; and to reject every thing that stands in competition with him, or the enjoyment of him. Christ is precious in the esteem of all true believers, *Pet. ii. 7.* Their high esteem of his incomparable preciousness and excellency induceth them to sell all, that they may buy this *Pearl of great price*, Mat. xiii. 46. this maketh them to say, *Lord evermore give us this bread, that cometh down from heaven and giveth life to the world: Lord, to whom shall we go; thou hast the words of eternal life*, John vi. 32, 33, 34, 68. because of the favour of his good ointments, *his name is as an ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love him*, Cant. i. 3. They are sick of love to him, because he is in their eyes the *chiefest of ten thousand*, Cant. v. 8, 10. As the glory of God that appeared in the wonderful beauty of the temple, and in the wisdom and glory of *Solomon* drew worshippers to God from the utmost parts of the earth, so the unparallel'd excellency of Christ, which was prefigured by the glory of *Solomon* and the temple, doth more powerfully draw believers in these gospel days. The devil, who is the God of this world, knows how necessary it is for our sal-
vation

vation, to discern all the glory and excellency of Christ, and therefore where the gospel is preached, he maketh it his great work to eclipse the glory of Christ in the ministry, and to blind the minds of the People, *lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them,* 2 Cor. iv. 4. One that is convinced of the truth of the gospel may be averse to the embracing of it, until he see also the goodness of it, that *Christ is altogether lovely and excellent.*

I come now to the *second principal act of faith*, whereby *Christ himself, and his spirit, and all his saving benefits are actually received into the heart*; which is, *believing on Christ as revealed, and freely promised to us in the gospel for all his salvation.* The spirit of God doth habitually dispose and incline our hearts to a right performance of this act, by enabling us to perform the first act according to the former instructions, by believing assuredly those great things of the gospel, whereby we are delivered *into a form of doctrine*, Rom. vi. 17. which we are to obey from our hearts, and to follow as our pattern in the manner of our acting faith in Christ for salvation. Therefore I need only exhort you briefly to act your faith in Christ, according to that form and pattern in which we have been already so largely instructed. You are to believe in Christ *as alone sufficient, and all-sufficient* for your happiness and salvation; despairing altogether of any attainment of happiness by your own wisdom, strength, works of righteousness, or any fleshly worldly confidences whatsoever: We must be

be as dead people to all other confidences, and account them to be *lost for Christ*, according to the example of the blessed apostle, *Phil. iii. 3, 7, 8*. We must not be grieved that we have nothing to trust upon besides Christ, for our salvation; but rather, we are to rejoice that we need nothing else, and that we have a sure foundation to rely upon, incomparably better than any other that can be imagined: And we must resolve to cast the burden of our souls wholly on Christ, and to seek salvation no other way, whatsoever becomes of us. If the cripple lay not the whole weight of his body upon a strong staff, but part of it on a rotten one, he is like to receive a fall. If the swimmer will not commit his body wholly to the water to bear him up, but catch at weeds, or struggle to feel out the ground, he may sink to the bottom. Christ will be all our salvation, or nothing; if we seek to be saved any other way, as the *Galatians* did by circumcision, *Christ will profit us nothing*, Gal. v. 2.

You are also to receive Christ *merely as a free gift*, given to the chief of sinners, resolving that you will not perform any conditions to procure your selves a right and title to him: But that you will come to him as a lost sinner, an ungodly creature, trusting on him that *justifieth the ungodly*; and that you will *buy him without money, and without any price* whatsoever, *Rom. iv. 5. Isa. lv. 2*. Look not on your own faith or love, or any good qualifications in your selves, as the ground of your trusting in Christ, but only to the free grace and loving kind-

kindness of God in Christ. *How excellent is thy loving kindness O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings,* Psal. xxxvi. 7. For if you make your faith, love or good qualifications to be your first and principal foundation, and you build Christ upon them, instead of building all upon Christ, you invert the order of the gospel, and Christ will profit you nothing.

Another thing to be observed diligently is, that you must come to Christ for a new holy heart and life, and all things necessary thereunto, as well as for deliverance from the wrath of God, and the torments of hell. You must also come to him with an ardent love and affection to him, and esteem him better than a thousand worlds, and the only excellent portion, loathing and abhorring your self as a vile sinful, and miserable creature, and accounting all things dung in comparison of his excellency, that you may be able to say from the bottom of your heart, *Whom have I in heaven but thee?* &c. Psal. lxxiii. 25.

Lastly, You must endeavour to draw near with *full assurance of faith,* Heb. x. 22. trusting on Christ confidently for your own particular salvation, upon the account of that general promise, *That whosoever believeth on Christ shall not be ashamed,* Rom. ix. 33. You must check your selves for all doubtings, fears, staggerings concerning your own salvation by Christ, saying with the psalmist, *Why art thou cast down O my soul,* &c. Psal. xlii. 11.

The

The *third* thing contained in the *direction* is, the *avoiding all delay* in the performance of this great work of *believing in Christ*. Until we have performed it, we continue under the power of sin and satan, and under the wrath of God, and there is nothing between hell and us, besides the breath of our nostrils. 'Tis dangerous for *Lot* to linger in *Sodom*, lest fire and brimstone come down from heaven upon him. The man slayer must fly with all haste to the city of refuge, lest the avenger of blood pursue him while his heart is hot, and slay him, Deut. xix. 5, 6. We should make haste and not delay, to keep God's commandments, Psal. cxix. 63 and fly for refuge to the hope set before us, Heb. vi. 18. And God commandeth us to fly thus by faith, without which it is impossible to please God in other duties. The work is of such a nature, that it may be performed as soon as you hear the gospel. As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me, Psal. xviii. 44. As soon as *Zion* travelled she brought forth her children, Isa. lxvi. 8. We have many examples of those that received the word by faith at the first hearing of it. Three thousand were added to the church on the very same day wherein *Peter* first published the gospel in *Jerusalem*, Acts ii. 41. so many *Jews* and *Gentiles* were converted at the first hearing of the apostle *Paul* at *Antioch*, Acts xiii. 42. The jaylor and all his house believed, and were baptized the same night wherein *Paul* first preached to them, Acts xvi. 33, 34. The gospel came at first to the *Thessalonians*, not in word only, but in power,

and

and in the Holy Ghost. 1 Thes. i. 5, 6. If God open the hearts of his people to attend diligently, they may be instructed in the knowledge of the gospel by one brief sermon, sufficiently to begin the practice of saving faith; and when they know their duty, God requireth immediate performance, without allowing us the least respite in the state of unbelief. When satan cannot prevail with people to reject wholly the duty of believing, his next attempt for the ruin of their souls is, to prevail with them at least, to delay and shift off the performance of it from time to time, by several false reasonings and imaginations which he putteth into their minds; the most ignorant and sensual are easily prevailed with to defer this duty, until they have taken their fill of the pleasures, profits, and honours of this world, and are summoned to prepare for another world, by infirmities, age, sickness, praying and hoping, that a large time of repentance will be granted unto them before they die. But such delays shew, that they are really unwilling to repent and believe, until they are forced by necessity; and that they prefer the pleasures, profits and honours of the world, above God and Christ, and their own souls. Thus they unfit themselves more and more for this great duty, by their customary walking in sin, and by mispending the precious time of their health and strength, which is most meet for the performance of this great work. They highly provoke God never to give them time, or grace to repent hereafter. Others imagine, that after they have heard the gospel of salvation by Christ, they may

may lawfully defer the believing it, until they have sufficiently examined the truth of some other different doctrine, or until God be pleased to afford them some other means, to assure them fully of the truth of the gospel. Thus they that are called *seekers*, mispend the day of grace, ever learning, but never coming to the *knowledge of the truth*, 2 Tim. iii. 7. But the truth of the gospel doth so clearly evidence it self by its own light, that if people do not wilfully shut their eyes, or blind themselves by their own pride, and love of their lusts, they would easily perceive that it is the truth of God, because the image of his grace, mercy, power, justice and holiness, appears manifestly engraven upon it. It is a sign people are proud, when they consent not to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the *doctrine which is according to godliness*, 1 Tim. vi. 3. If they were humble and sincerely inclined to do the will of God, they would know whether the doctrine be of God or no, *John vii. 17*. They would quickly be perswaded of the truth (by *Moses* and the prophets, Christ and the apostles) spoken to them in the scripture; and if they will not hear them, neither will they *be perswaded tho' one rose from the dead*; or whatever other miracle be wrought to confirm the divine authority of the gospel, *Luke xvi. 31*. Another sort of people there are, that delay the great work of believing, to the ruin of their souls, resting in an attendance upon the *outward means* of grace and salvation, instead of any endeavours to receive Christ by faith, tho' they be convinced of the truth of the gospel:
This

This they call waiting upon God at the doors of his grace and salvation, in the use of means appointed by him, and sitting under the droppings of the sanctuary. But let them know, that this is not the right waiting on God required in scripture; it is rather disobedience to God, and to the means of his appointment, who requires, that we should be *doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving our selves*, James i. 22. and that we should come in to the *spiritual feast*, Luke xiv. 23. and not only stand at the door, or sit under the droppings of the house of God, lest Christ repute us no better than eye-droppers. That holy waiting on the Lord commended to us in scripture, is ever accompanied with believing and hoping in the Lord, and dependeth thereon. I had *fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living*, Psal. xxvii. 13, 14. *It is good that a man should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord*, Lam. iii. 26. What is it that these deluded ones wait for, before they perform the duty of believing? Is it for more knowledge of the gospel? The way to increase thy knowledge as well as any other talent, is to make use of what thou hast received already; Believe heartily on Christ for all thy salvation, according to that little knowledge of the gospel which thou hast, and thou wilt have an interest in the promise of knowledge contained in the new covenant, *They shall all know me from the least to the greatest of them, saith the Lord*, Jer. xxxi. 34. Is it for the appointed time of thy conversion that

thou

thou waitest? Then thou waitest as those impatient folk lay at the pool of *Bethseda*, waiting for the season when the angel would come down and move the water; know then that if thou enter into Christ now by faith, thou shalt find in him waters of life, and the spirit moving them for the healing and quickning of thy soul. God hath appointed by his word, that it shall be thy duty to endeavour that the present time should be the time of thy conversion; as the Holy Ghost saith, *To day if thou wilt hear his voice, harden not thy heart*, Heb. iii. 7, 8. and thou shalt never know at what time God hath purposed in his secret counsel to give faith to thee, until thou dost actually believe. Dost thou wait for any manifestations or flowings in of God's saving love to thy soul? Then the way to obtain it is, to *believe*, that the *God of hope may fill thee with all joy and peace in believing*, Rom. xv. 13. Thou hast sufficient manifestation of God's love to thy soul, by the free promises of life and salvation by Christ; do but trust on the name of the Lord, and stay upon thy God, when thou walkest in darkness and seekest no light of sensible comforts any other way. Otherwise thou waitest for comfort in vain, and this thou shalt have at the Lord's hand, thou shalt *lye down in sorrow*, Isa. l. 10, 11. Dost thou wait for any qualifications to prepare thee for the work of believing? If they be good and holy qualifications, thou canst not have them before faith; but they are either included in the nature of faith, or they are fruits of it, as hath been largely proved. If they be

Q

bad

bad and sinful, 'tis strange that any should wait for them, and yet no more strange than true. Some foolishly wait to be terrified with the sense of God's wrath, and despairing thoughts; and these they call the pangs of the new birth, tho' in their own nature they are rather the pangs of the spiritual death, and bring forth hatred to God rather than holiness, and therefore we should strive to prevent them, by believing God's love in Christ, rather than to wait for them: It is true God maketh these despairing thoughts as well as other sins work for good to them that are delivered from them by faith in Christ, they are moved thereby to hate sin, and to prize Christ the more, and the comforts of his Gospel, and to loath and abhor themselves, yet many are brought to Christ without them, by God's giving them the knowledge of their own sins, and of Christ's salvation together; several examples of these were above mentioned, who received the word with joy at the first hearing of it: And we must not desire or wait for any evil of sin, such as these despairing thoughts are, that good may come of it: Neither should we expect to be worse before we better, when we may and ought to be better presently by believing on Christ.

The *Fourth* thing in the *Direction* is, that we should *continue* and *increase* in the most holy faith. And that we may, we must not think that when we have once attained to the grace of saving faith, and thereby are begotten anew in Christ, our names are up in heaven and there-

therefore we may be careless : But as long as we continue in this life, we must endeavour to *continue in the faith grounded and settled, not moved away from the hope of the gospel*, Col. i. 23. and to *hold the beginning of our confidence, and the rejoicing of hope stedfast to the end*, Heb. iii. 6. and *build up our selves in our most holy faith*, Jude 20, *abounding therein with thanksgiving*, Col. ii. 7. Tho' we receive Christ freely by faith, yet we are but babes in Christ, 1 Cor. iii. 1. and we must not account, that we *have already attained or are made perfect*, Phil. iii. 12, 13. but we must strive to be more rooted and built up in him, until we come to the *perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*, Eph. iv. 13. If the new nature be really in us by regeneration, it will have an appetite to its own continuance and increase, until it come to perfection as the new born babe, 1 Pet. ii. 2. And we are not only to receive Christ and a new holy nature by faith, but also to live and walk by it, and to resist the devil, and to quench all his fiery darts by it, and also to grow in grace, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God, for *we are kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto salvation*, 1 Pet. i. 5. All our christian warfare is the good fight of faith, 1 Tim. vi. 12. All spiritual life and holiness continue, grow or decay in us, according as faith continueth, groweth or decayeth in us; *but when this faith beginneth to sink by fears and doubtings, the man himself beginneth to sink together with it*, Matth. xiv. 29.

31. Faith is like the hand of *Moses*, while it is held up *Israel prevails*, when it is let down *Amaleck prevails*, *Exod. xvii. 11.* this continuance and growth in faith will require our labour and industry as well as the beginning, tho' we are to ascribe the glory of all to the grace of God in Christ, *who is the finisher as well as the author of it*, *Heb. xii. 2.* The church meeteth with great difficulties in her marching through the wilderness of this world to the heavenly *Canaan*, as well as in her first deliverance from *Egyptian* bondage; yea, we often meet with greater difficulties in going to perfection, than we did in the beginning of the good work. The wisdom and mercy of God for ordering it, that we shall be exercised with the sharpest dispensations of providence, and the fiercest assaults of our own corruptions and *Satan's* temptations after we have grace given us to stand in the evil day. You must therefore endeavour to continue and go on, in the same right manner as I have taught you to begin this great work of believing in Christ, that your faith may be of the same nature from the beginning to the end, though it increase in degrees; for our faith is imperfect and joyned with much unbelief in this world, and we had need to pray still, *Lord I believe, help my unbelief*, *Mar. ix. 24.* and therefore we have need to strive for more faith, that we may receive Christ in greater perfection. If you find your faith hath produced good works, you should thereby increase your confidence in Christ for salvation by his mere grace: But take heed

char

changing the nature of your faith, from trusting on the grace and merits of Christ, to trusting on your own works, according to the *popish* doctrine, that our first justification is by grace and faith only, but our second justification is also by works. Beware also of trusting on faith it'selt as a work of righteousness, instead of trusting on Christ by faith. If you do not find that your believing in such a right manner as I have described, doth produce such fruits of holiness as you desire, you ought not to diminish, but rather to increase your confidence in Christ, knowing that the weakness of your faith hindereth its fruitfulness; and the greater your confidence is concerning the love of God to you in Christ, the greater will be your love to God and to his service. If you fall into any gross sin after the work is begun in you, as *David* and *Peter* did, think not that you must cast away your confidence and expect nothing but wrath from God and Christ, and that you must refuse to be comforted by the grace of Christ, at least for some time; for thus you would be the more weak and prone to fall into other sins; but rather strive to believe more confidently that you *have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and that he is the propitiation for our sins*, 1 John ii. 1, 2. and let not the guilt of sin stay at all upon your conscience, but wash it away with all speed, in the fountain of Christ's blood which is opened for us, that it may be ready for our use on all such incident occasions; that so you may be humbled for your sins in a gospel way, and may hate your own sinfulness, and be sorry for it

with godly sorrow out of love to God. *Peter* might have been ruined for ever by denying Christ, as *Judas* was by betraying him, if *Peter's* faith had not been upheld by the prayer of Christ, *Luke* xxii. 32. If a cloud be cast over all your inward qualifications, so that you can see no grace at all in your selves, yet still trust on him that justifieth the ungodly, and came to seek and to save them that are lost. If God seem to deal with you as an enemy, by bringing on you some horrible affliction, as he did upon *Job*, beware of condemning your faith and its fruits, as if they were not acceptable to God, but rather say with holy *Job*, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him, but I will maintain mine own ways before him.* Strive to keep and to increase faith by faith; i. e. by acting faith frequently, by trusting on God to keep and increase it, being confident that he that hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of *Jesus Christ*, *Phil.* i. 6.

D I R E C T I O N XII.

Make diligent use of your most holy faith for the immediate performance of the duties of the law, by walking no longer according to your old natural state, or any principles or means of practice that belong unto it, but only according to that new state which you receive by faith, and the principles and means of practice that properly belong thereunto; and strive to continue and increase in such manner of practice: This is the only way to attain to an acceptable performance of those holy, and righteous duties, as far as it is possible in this present life.

E X P L I C A T I O N.

HERE I am guiding you to the manner of practice, wherein you are to make use of faith and of all other effectual means of holiness before treated of, which faith layeth hold on, for the immediate performance of the law, which is the great end aimed at in this whole treatise: And therefore this deserveth to be diligently considered as the *principal direction*, to which all the foregoing and following, are subservient. As for the meaning of it, I have already shewed that our old natural state, is that which we derive from the first *Adam* by natural generation, and it is called in the scripture the

old man, and while we be in it, we are said to be in the flesh; and our new state is that which we receive from the second *Adam* Jesus Christ, by being new born in union and fellowship with him thro' faith: And it is called in scripture, the new man, and when we are in it, we are said to be in the spirit. The principles and means of practice belonging to a natural state, are such, as persons do or may attain and make use of, before they are in Christ by faith. Such as belong properly to the new state, are the manifold holy endowments, privileges and enjoyments which we partake of in Christ by faith, such as have already appeared to be the only effectual means of a holy life. We are said to walk according to either of these states, or to the principles or means that belong to either of them, when we are moved and guided by virtue of them, to such actings as are agreeable to them. Thus kings act according to their state, in commanding authoritatively, and in magnificent bounty; *poor men in the way of service and obedience; and children indiscreetly*, Esther i. 7. Prov. xviii. 23. 1 Cor. xiii. 11. So the manner of practice here directed to, consists in moving and guiding our selves in the performance of the works of the law by *gospel principles* and *means*: This is the rare and excellent art of godliness, in which every christian should strive to be skilful and expert. The reason why many come off with shame and confusion after they have a long time laboured with much zeal and industry for the attainment of true godliness, is, because they were

never

never acquainted with this holy art, and never
endeavoured to practise in a right gospel way.
Some worldly arts are called mysteries, but a-
bove all, this spiritual art of godliness, is *with-
out controversy a great mystery*, 1 Tim. iii. 16.
because the means that are to be made use of in
it are deeply mysterious, as hath been shewed,
and you are not a skilful artist till you know
them, and can reduce them to practice. It is
a manner of practice far above the sphere of na-
tural ability, such as would never have entred
into the hearts of the wisest in the world, if it
had not been revealed to us in the scriptures;
and when it is there most plainly revealed, con-
tinueth a dark riddle to those that are not in-
wardly enlightned and taught by the holy spirit:
Such, as many godly persons guided by the spi-
rit do in some measure walk in, yet do but ob-
scurely discern, they can hardly perceive their
own knowledge of it, and can hardly give
any account to others of the way wherein they
walk. As the disciples that walked in Christ
the way to the father, and yet perceived not
that knowledge in themselves, *Lord we know
not whither thou goest, and how can we know
the way?* John xiv. 4. This is the reason why
many poor believers are so weak in Christ, and
attain so small a degree of holiness and righte-
ousness. Therefore that you may the better be
acquainted with a mystery of so high concern-
ment, I shall shew in the first place, that *the
holy scriptures do direct you to this manner of
practice*, as only effectual for the performance
of

of holy duties ; and then I shall lay before you *some necessary instructions*, that you may understand how to walk aright in it, and continue and go forward therein, till you be made perfect in Christ.

1. For the *first* of these, the holy scriptures are very large and clear, in directing us to this manner of practice, and to continuance and growth therein. And here it is useful for us to observe the great variety of peculiar words and phrases, whereby the Holy Ghost teacheth this mystery, which many that frequently read the scriptures, yea that pretend to be preachers of the gospel, do little understand or regard, shewing thereby that the things of the spirit of God are foolishness to them, and that they are not yet acquainted with the form of sound words, and are strangers to the very language of the gospel, which they profess and pretend to preach. I shall therefore present to your view several of those peculiar words and phrases whereby this mysterious manner of practice is express'd in the holy scriptures, and commended to you as the only way for the sure attainment of all holiness in heart and life. I shall rank such of them together as agree in sense; that the multitude of them may not breed confusion in your thoughts.

1. This is the manner of practice in scripture, which is expressed by *living by faith*, Hab. ii. 4. Gal. ii. 20. Heb. x. 38. *Walking by faith*, 2 Cor. v. 7. *Faith working by love*, Gal. v. 6. *Overcoming the world by faith*, 1 John v. 4. *Quenching all the fiery darts of the wicked, by the shield of faith*, Eph. vi. 16. Some make

no more of *living and walking by faith*, than merely a stirring up, and encouraging our selves to our duty by such principles as we believe. Thus the *Jews* might account that they *lived by faith*, because they professed and assented unto the doctrine of *Moses* and the prophets, and were moved thereby to a zeal of God, though they sought *righteousness not by faith*, but as it were, *by the works of the law*, Rom. iii. 32. Thus *Paul* might think he *lived by faith*, while he was a zealous *Pharisee*, but afterwards he knew that the *life of faith* consisted in *dying to the law, and living to God*; and that not himself, but *Christ lived in him*, Gal. ii. 19. As it is one and the same thing to be *justified by faith, and by Christ believed on*, Rom. v. 1. so to *live, walk and work by faith*, is all one with *living, walking, working* by means of *Christ* and his saving endowments which we receive and make use of by faith, to guide and move our selves to the practice of holiness.

2. The same thing is commended to us by the terms of *walking, rooted and built up in Christ*, Col. ii. 6. *living to God, and not to our selves, but to have Christ living in us*, Gal. ii. 19, 20, *Good conversation in Christ*, 1 Pet. iii. 16. *Putting on the Lord Jesus Christ* that we may *walk honestly as in the day*, Rom. xiii. 13, 14. *Being strong in the Lord and in the power of his might*, Eph. vi. 10, 11. *Doing all things in the name of Christ*, Col. iii. 17. *walking up and down in the name of the Lord*, Zech. x. 12. *going in the strength of the Lord, making mention of his righteousness, even of his only*, Psal.

Psal. lxxi. 16. These phrases are frequent, and do sufficiently explain one another; and do shew, that we are to practise holiness, not only by virtue of Christ's authority; but also of his strengthening endowments moving us and encouraging us thereunto.

3. It is also signified by the phrases of being *strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus*, 2 Tim. ii. 1. *having your conversation in the world not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God*, 2 Cor. i. 12. *having or holding fast grace, that we may serve God acceptably, labouring abundantly in such a manner, as that the whole work is not performed by us, but by the grace of God that is with us*, 1 Cor. xv. 10. By grace therefore, we may well understand the privileges of our new state given to us in Christ, whereby we ought to be influenced and guided in the performance of holy duties.

4. It is also signified when we are to *put off the old, and put on the new man*; yea, to continue in so doing, tho' we have done it in a measure already, and that we avoid our former *sinful conversation*, Eph. iv. 21, 22, 24. and to avoid *sin*; because we have *put off the old, and put on the new man*, Col. iii. 9, 10, 11. I have already shewed, that by this *two fold man*, is not meant merely *sin and holiness*: But by the former is meant our natural estate, with all its endowments, whereby we are furnished only to the practice of sin; and by the latter, our new estate in Christ, that whereby we are furnished with all means necessary for the practice of holiness.

5. We

5. We are to understand the same thing, when we are taught, *not to walk after the flesh but after the spirit*, that we may be free from the law of sin, and that the *righteousness of the law may be fulfilled in us*, Rom. viii. 1, 2, 3. and through the spirit to *mortifie the deeds of the body*, and to be led by the spirit, because we live by the spirit, and have *crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts*, Gal. v. 24. The apostle doth shew by these expressions, *not only that we are to practice holiness*, but also, *by what means we may do it effectually*. By the flesh is meant, our old nature derived from the first Adam. And by the spirit, is meant the spirit of Christ, and that new nature which we have by him dwelling in us. We are said to walk after either of these natures, when we make the properties or qualifications of either of them to be the principles of our practice. So when we are taught to serve in *newness of spirit*, and *not in the oldness of the letter*, that so we may *bring forth fruit unto God*: The meaning is, that we must endeavour to bring forth the *fruits of holiness*, not by virtue of the law, that killing letter, to which the flesh is married, and by which the motions of sin are in us, but by virtue of the *spirit*, and his manifold riches which we partake of in our new state, by a *mystical marriage with Christ*, Rom. vii. 4, 5, 6. and by virtue of such principles as belong to the new state, declared in the gospel, whereby the *holy spirit is ministered to us*.

6. This is the manner of walking which the apostle Paul directeth us unto, when he teacheth

eth us by his own Example, that the continual work of our lives should be *to know Christ, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death, if by any means we may attain to the resurrection of the dead, and to encrease and press forward in this kind of knowledge*, Phil. iii. 10, 11, 12, 15. Certainly he meaneth such an experimental knowlege of Christ, and his death and resurrection, as effectually makes us conformable thereunto in dying to sin, and living to God. And he would hereby guide us to make use of Christ and his death and resurrection by faith, as the powerful means of all holiness in heart and life; and to encrease in this manner of walking, until we attain unto *perfection in Christ*.

2. The second thing proposed, was, to lay before you some necessary instructions, that your steps may be guided aright, to continue and go forward in this way of holiness, until you be made perfect in Christ. And seeing we are naturally prone to mistake this way, and are utterly unable to find it out, or discern it by our own reason and understanding, we should the more diligently attend to these instructions taken out of the holy scriptures. And we should *pray earnestly*, that God would give unto us the *spirit of wisdom and revelation*, that we may *discern the way of holiness thereby*, and walk aright in it, according to that gracious promise. *The wayfaring men, tho' fools, shall not err therein*, Isa. xxxv. 8.

1. Let us observe and consider diligently in our whole conversation, that tho' we are partakers of a new holy state by faith in Christ, yet our natural state doth remain, in a measure; with all its corrupt principles and properties; as long as we live in this present world, our apprehension of Christ and his perfection in this life is only by faith, whereas by sense and reason we may apprehend much in our selves contrary to Christ; and this faith is imperfect: So that true believers have cause to pray to God to help their unbelief, *Mar. ix. 24.* Therefore, tho' we receive perfect Christ by faith, yet the measure and degree of enjoying him is imperfect, and we hope still, so long as we are in this world, to enjoy him in a higher degree of perfection than we have done; we are yet but *weak in Christ*, *2 Cor. xiii. 4.* Children in comparison to the *perfection* we expect in another world, *1 Cor. xiii. 10, 11.* and we must grow still, till we come to the *perfect man*, *Eph. iv. 13.* and some are weaker babes than others, and have received Christ in so small a measure, that they may be accounted *carnal rather than spiritual*, *1 Cor. iii. 1.* And because all the blessings and perfections of our new state, as justification, the gift of the spirit, and of the holy nature, and the adoption of children are seated and treasured up in Christ, and joined with him inseparably, we can receive them no further than we receive Christ himself by faith, which we do in an imperfect measure and degree in this life. The apostle *Paul* proposeth himself a pattern for all those that are *perfect in the truth*

truth of grace to imitate. And yet he professeth, that he was not yet made so perfect in the degree or measure of saving endowments, but that he did still press forward towards the mark for the prize of the high-calling of God in Christ Jesus, labouring still to apprehend and win Christ more perfectly; and to be found in him, not having his own righteousness, but that which is of God by faith; and to gain more experimental knowledge of Christ, and of the fellowship of his sufferings, and the power of his resurrection, being made conformable thereunto; Phil. iii. 8, 10, 14. Believers are justified already, yet wait for the hope of righteousness by faith, i. e. for the full enjoyment of the righteousness of Christ Gal. v. 5. They have received but the first fruits of the spirit, and must wait for a more full enjoyment of it. The spirit witnesseth now to them, that they are the children of God; and yet they groan within themselves, waiting for more full enjoyment of adoption, Rom. viii. 23. Now seeing the degree and measure of our reception and enjoyment of Christ with all the blessings of our new state in him in this life is imperfect, it followeth clearly, that our contrary natural state with its properties remaineth still in us in some degree, and is not perfectly abolished; so that all believers in this world, do, in some degree, partake of these two contrary states. Believers have indeed put off the old man, and put on the new man, where Christ is all and in all, Col. iii. 10, 11. yet they are to put the old man off, and the new man on more and more, because the old man remaineth

eth still in a measure. They are said to be, *not in the flesh, but in the spirit*; because their being in the spirit is their best and lasting state, as denominations are usually taken from the better part, but yet the flesh is in them, and they find work enough to mortify the deeds of it, *Rom. viii. 9, 13.* Therefore several things which are contrary to each other, are frequently attributed to believers in the scripture, with respect to these two contrary states, wherein one place seems to contradict another, and yet both are true in divers respects: Thus holy *Paul* saith truly of himself, *I live, yet not I*, *Gal. ii. 20.* because he did live to God by Christ living in him; and yet in another respect according to his natural state, he did not live to God. Again, he professeth that he was *carnal, sold under sin*, and yet on the contrary, that he allowed not sin, but *hated* it; he sheweth how both these were true concerning himself in divers respects: He saith, *in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing*; and I *delight* to do the will of God according to the inner-man: *With the mind I my self serve the law of God, but with the flesh, the law of sin*, *Rom. vii. 14, 15, 25.* *John* saith, *He that saith he hath no sin, deceiveth himself and is a liar*, *1 John i. 8.* and also that 'tis true that *whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed*, i. e. Christ's, the new spiritual nature, remaineth in him, and he can't sin because he is *born of God*, *1 John iii. 9.* It is true that we are weak and nothing, and yet strong and able to *do all things*, *1 Cor. xii. 10, 11.*

Phil. iv. 13. It is true that believers are dead because of sin, but alive because of righteousness, *Rom.* viii. 10. and that when they dye by a natural death, they shall never dye, *John* xi. 25, 26. They are sons that have the inheritance by their birth-right, and yet in some respects may differ nothing from servants, and so they may be under the law in a sense, and yet under grace, and Heirs according to the free promise at the same time, *Gal.* iv. 1, 2. They are redeemed from the curse of the law, and have forgiveness of sins, and a promise that God will never be wroth with them, nor rebuke them any more, *Gal.* iii. 13. *Eph.* i. 7. *Isa.* liv. 9. And yet on the contrary, the curse written in the law, is sometimes poured out upon them, *Dan.* ix. 11. and they have need still to pray that God would deliver them from their guiltiness, and forgive their debts, *Psal.* li. 14. *Mat.* vi. 12. and they may expect that God will punish them for all their iniquities, *Amos* iii. 2. These contrary things asserted concerning believers in scripture, do sufficiently manifest that they partake of two contrary states in this life; and this is a plain, and easie and ready way to reconcile these seeming contradictions, whatever other ways be used to reconcile some of them. And what reason is thereto question that the old state remaineth in believers in some degrees, seeing all sound protestants acknowledge that the sinful depravation and pollution of our natures, commonly called *original sin*, which is one principal part of this old state, doth remain in all as long as they live

live in this world? Now though some penal evils may be said to remain in us, yet we can't suppose that this original pollution is continued in us, as considered in Christ; but, as considered in our old state derived from the first *Adam*. Therefore the first sin of *Adam* is imputed in some respect, even to those that are justified by faith, and they remain in a measure as aforesaid, under the punishment and curse denounced, *Gen. ii. 17. in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*; and on this account the same original guilt and pollution is propagated to the children of believing parents, as well as others by natural generation; and if such a great and fundamental part of the natural state continues in believers, as subjection to the guilt of the first sin and original corruption, which is one great part of the punishment and death threatened, and by which we are prone and inclined to all actual sins; why should we not judge that other parts of the same state, do likewise continue in them, as the guilt of their own actual sins, and subjection to the wrath of God and the curses and punishments denounced against them in the law? And why should we not judge that all the miseries of this life, and death it self, are inflicted upon believers, at least in some respect, as punishments of sin? It may be objected that this doctrine of a twofold state of believers in this life, doth much derogate from the perfection of our justification by Christ, and from the fullness of all the grace and spiritual blessings of Christ, and from the merits of his death and the power of his spirit; and that it great-

ly diminisheth the consolation of believers in Christ. But it may be easily vindicated from this objection, if we understand it rightly; for notwithstanding this twofold state, it still holdeth true, that believers while they are on earth, have all perfection of spiritual blessings, justification, adoption, the gift of the spirit, holiness, eternal life and glory, in and with Christ, *Eph. i. 3.* In the person of Christ who is now in heaven, the old man is perfectly crucified; they are dead to sin, and to the law and its curse, and they are quickened together with him, and raised up with him, and made to sit in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, *Eph. ii. 6, 7.* and believers do in their own persons receive and enjoy by faith all these perfect spiritual blessings of Christ, as far as they receive and enjoy Christ himself dwelling in them, and no further. Thus far they are in a new state free from the guilt, pollution and punishment of sin, and so from the wrath of God and all miseries, and death itself, while they are in this world: Yea, all the guilt, pollution, and punishments of sin, and all evils whatsoever, which they are subject to according to their natural state, do them no harm according to this new state, but work for their good, and are no evils, but rather advantages to them, tending to the destruction only of the flesh, and to the perfection of the new man in Christ. Yet it holdeth true also that our redemption and enjoyment of Christ himself and all his perfections, is but in an imperfect measure and degree, until faith be turned into heavenly vision and fruition of Christ;
and

and therefore our old sinful state with the evils thereof, is not perfectly abolished during this life. The kingdom of heaven, or the grace of Christ within us, is like leaven in meal, which doth not unite it self perfectly to the meal in an instant, but by degrees, until *the whole be leavened*, Mat. xiii. 33. or *like the morning light that expelleth darkness by degrees, shining more and more unto a perfect day*, Prov. iv. 18.

This cannot be justly accounted any derogation from the merits of Christ's death, or from the power of his spirit, seeing Christ never intended to bring to pass by his death, or by the power of his spirit, that we should enjoy his spiritual blessings any further than we are in him, and enjoy him by faith; or that we should be made holy or happy according to the flesh, by a reformation of our natural state, as hath been shewed: Neither doth this diminish the consolation of believers in Christ, for thereby they may know that they have the perfection of grace and happiness in Christ, and that they enjoy it in this world, as far as they enjoy Christ himself by faith; and that they shall enjoy it in a perfect measure, and be fully freed from their sinful and miserable state, when that frame of nature which they received from the first *Adam*, is dissolved by death.

This instruction is very useful to frame our souls aright for the practising holiness, only by those gospel principles and means that belong to our new state, which we are partakers of by faith in Christ. And thus it is easily vindicated from another great objection, wherein the

Papists and Quakers do much triumph. They appeal to mens conscience to answer this question, Which doctrine is most likely to bring people to the practice of true godliness, theirs which teacheth, *That perfect holiness may be attained in this life*, or ours which teacheth, *that it is impossible for us to keep the law perfectly, and to purge our selves from all sin as long as we live in this world, though we use our best endeavours?* They think that common reason will make the verdict pass for them against our doctrine, as that which discourageth all endeavours for perfection, and hardneth the hearts of people to allow themselves in sin, because they cannot avoid it. But on the contrary, the doctrine of *perfectionists* hardens people to allow themselves in sin, and to call evil good, as the *Papists* account, *That the concupiscence of the flesh against the spirit is no sin, but rather good matter for the exercise of their virtues, because the most perfect in this life are not without it.* It also discourageth those that labour to get holiness in the right way, by faith in Christ, and maketh them to think that they labour in vain, because they find themselves still sinful, and far from perfection, when they have done their best to attain it. It hindereth our diligence in seeking holiness, by these principles and means, whereby only it can be found: For who will be diligent and watchful to avoid walking according to his own carnal principles, if he think that his own carnal state with its principles, is quite abolished, and is out of him, so that at present he is in no danger of walking

walking according to them? Whatsoever good works the doctrine of the *perfectionists* may serve to promote, I am sure it hindereth a great part of that work which Christ would have us to be employed in as long as we live in this world; we must know that our old state with its evil principles, continueth still in a measure, or else we shall not be fit for the great duties of confessing of sins, loathing our selves for them, praying earnestly for the pardon of them, a just sorrowing for them with a godly sorrow, accepting the punishment of our sins, and giving God the glory of his justice, and offering to him the sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit, being poor in spirit, working out our salvation with fear and trembling. Some have doubted how it can consist with our justification by Christ, that we should be still liable to be punished for our sins, and obliged to pray for the pardon of them, because they have not well considered the twofold state of believers in this life; and except we know this and keep it in mind, we shall never be fit to practise continually the great duties that tend to the putting off the old man and putting on the new man, and mortifying the deeds of the body by the spirit, praying continually that God would renew a right spirit in us, and sanctify us throughout; pressing forward to perfection, desiring the sincere milk of the word, and the enjoyment of other ordinances. Christ hath appointed that his church on earth should be employed in such works; and *perfectionists* either do or fain would account them needless for them, and that they have no longer

need of Christ himself to be their spiritual physician and advocate with the father, and propitiation for their sins: Therefore they are not fit to be members of the church on earth, and are never likely to be members of the church in heaven, except they make can a ladder and climb up thither before their time.

2. Despair of purging the flesh or natural man of its sinful lusts and inclinations, and of practising holiness, by *your* willing and resolving to do the best that lieth in *your own* power, and trusting on the grace of God and Christ to help you in such resolutions and endeavours; rather resolve to trust on Christ to work in you to will and to do by *his own power*, according to his own good pleasure. They that are convinced of their own sin and misery, do commonly first think to *tame the flesh*, and to subdue and root out its lusts, and to make their corrupt nature to be better natured, and inclined to holiness by their struggling and wrestling with it: And if they can but bring their hearts to a full purpose and resolution to do the best that lieth in them, they hope that by such a resolution, they shall be able to atchieve great enterprizes in the conquest of their lusts, and performance of the most difficult duties. It is the great work of some zealous divines, in their preaching and writings, to stir up people to this resolution, wherein they place the chiefest turning point from sin to godliness. And they think that this is not contrary to the life of faith, because they trust on the grace of God through Christ, to help them in all such resolutions and endeavours.

ours.

ours. Thus they endeavour to reform their old state, and to be made perfect in the flesh, instead of putting it off, and walking according to the new state in Christ. They trust on low carnal things for holiness, and upon the acts of their own will, their purposes, resolutions and endeavours, instead of Christ; and they trust to Christ to help them in this carnal way, whereas true faith would teach them that they are nothing, and that they do but labour in vain. They may as well wash a Blackmoor white, as purge the flesh or natural man from its evil lusts, and make it pure and holy. It is desperately wicked, past all cure: It will unavoidably lust against the spirit of God, even in the best saints on earth, *Gal. v. 17. Its mind is enmity to the law of God, and neither is, nor can be subject to it, Rom. viii. 7.* They that would cure it and make it holy by their own resolutions and endeavours, do act quite contrary to the design of Christ's death, for he died not that the flesh, or old natural man might be made holy, but that it might be crucified and destroyed out of us, *Rom. vi. 6.* and that we might live to God, not to our selves, or by any natural power of our own resolutions or endeavours, but by Christ living in us, and by his spirit bringing forth the fruits of righteousness in us, *Gal. ii. 20.* and *v. 24, 25.* Therefore we must be content to leave the natural man vile and wicked as we found it, until it be utterly abolished by death, though we must not allow its wickedness, but rather groan to be delivered from the body of this death,

death, thanking God that there is a deliverance through Jesus Christ our Lord. Our way to mortify sinful affections and lusts, must be, not by purging them out of the flesh, but by putting off the flesh it self, and getting above into Christ by faith, and walking in that new nature that is by him; thus *the way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath*. Prov. xv. 24. Our willing, resolving and endeavouring, must be to do the best, not that lyeth in our selves or in our own power, but that Christ and the power of his spirit shall be pleased to work in us, for in us, *i. e. in our flesh, there dwelleth no good thing*, Rom. vii. 18. We have great ground to trust in God and Christ for help in such resolutions and endeavours after holiness, as in things that are agreeable to the design of Christ in our redemption, and to the way of acting and living by faith. It is likely that *Peter* sincerely resolved to die with Christ rather than to deny him, and to do all that he could by his own power for that end; but Christ made him quickly to see the weakness and vanity of such resolutions, and we see by experience, what many resolutions made in sickness and other dangers mostly come to. It is not enough for us to trust on Christ to help us to act and endeavour so far only as creatures, for so the worst of men are helped; he is the *Jehovah* in whom they live, move, and have their being, Act. xvii. 28. and 'tis likely the *Pharisee* would trust on God to help him in duty, as he would thank God for the performance of duty, Luke xviii. 11. and this is all the faith that many make use of in order

der to a holy practice: But we must trust on Christ to enable, us above the strength of our own natural power, by vertue of the new nature which we have in Christ, and by his spirit dwelling and working in us; or else our best endeavours will be altogether sinful, and mere hypocrisie, notwithstanding all the help for which we trust upon him. We must also take heed of depending for holiness upon any resolutions to walk in Christ, or any written covenants, or any holiness that we have already received; for we must know that the vertue of these things continues no longer than we continue walking in Christ and Christ in us. They must be kept up by the continual presence of Christ in us, as light is maintained by the presence of the sun, and cannot subsist without it.

3. You must not seek to procure forgiveness of sins, the favour of God, a new holy nature, life, and happiness by any works of the moral law, or by any rites and ceremonies whatever; but rather, you must work as those that have all these things already according to your new state in Christ; as such who are only to receive them more and more by faith, as they are ready prepared and treasured up for you, and freely given to you in your *spiritual head, the Lord Jesus Christ*. If we walk as those that are yet wholly to seek for the procurement of such enjoyments as these, it is a manifest sign, that at present, we judge ourselves to be without them and without Christ himself; in whose fulness they are all contained: And therefore we walk according to our old natural state, as those that

are

are yet in the flesh, and that would get salvation in it, and by our carnal works and observances, instead of living altogether on Christ by faith. This practice is according to the tenour of the covenant of works, as I have before shewed. And we have no ground to trust on Christ and his spirit to work holiness in us this way; for we are dead to the legal covenant by the *body of Christ*, Rom. vii. 4. And if we be *led by the spirit*, we are not *under the law*, Gal. v. 18. When the *Galatians* were seduced by false teachers, to seek the procurement of justification and life by circumcision, and other works of the mosaical law, the apostle *Paul* rebuketh them for seeking to be made *perfect in the flesh*, directly contrary to their good *beginning in the spirit*, for rendring *Christ* of none effect to them, and for falling from grace; Gal. iii. 3. and v. 4. And when some of the *Colossians* sought perfection in the like manner, by observation of circumcision, holy meats, holy times, and other rudiments of the world, the same apostle blameth them for not holding the *head Jesus Christ*, and as such as were not *dead and risen with Christ*, but *living merely in the world*, Col. ii. 19, 20. and iii. 1. He clearly sheweth, that those who seek any saving enjoyments in such a way, do walk according to their old natural state: And that the true manner of living by faith in Christ, is to walk as those that have all fulness and perfection of spiritual blessings in Christ by faith, and need not seek for them any other way to procure them for themselves. In this sense it is a true saying,
That

That *Believers should not act for Life, but from life.* They must act as those that are not procuring life by their works, but as such who have already received and derived *life from Christ*, and act from the power and virtue received from him. And hereby it appears, that the papists, and all others that think to justify, purify, sanctify, and save themselves by any of their own works, rites or ceremonies whatever, do walk in a carnal way, as those that are without any present interest in Christ, and shall never attain unto holiness or happiness, until they learn a better way of religion.

4. Think not that you can effectually incline your heart to the immediate practice of holiness, by any such practical principles, as do only serve to bind, press and urge you to the performance of holy duties: But rather let such principles stir you up to go to Christ first by faith, that you may be effectually inclined to the immediate practice of holiness in him by gospel principles, that strengthen and enable you, as well as oblige you thereunto. There are some practical principles, that do only bind, press, and urge us to holy duties, by shewing the reasonableness, equity, and necessity of our obedience, without shewing at all, how we that are by nature *dead in sin, under the wrath of God*, may have any strength and ability for the performance of them. As for instance, the authority of God the law-giver, our absolute dependance on him as our creator, preserver, governor, in whose hand is our life, breath, and all our happiness here and for ever. His all seeing
eye,

ye, that searcheth our heart, discerneth our very thoughts and secret purposes, his exact justice, in *rendring to all according to their works*; his almighty and eternal power to reward those that obey him, and to punish transgressors for ever, the *unspeakable joy of heaven*, and *terrible damnation of hell*. Such principles as these do bind our consciences very strictly, and do work very strongly upon the prevalent affections of hope and fear, to press and urge our hearts to the performance of holy duties, if we believe them assuredly, and work them earnestly upon our hearts, by frequent, serious, lively meditation: And therefore some account them the most forcible and effectual means to form any virtue in the soul, and to bring it to immediate performance of any duty, tho' never so difficult; and that the life of faith consisteth principally in our living to God in holiness, by a constant belief and meditation on them. And they account those things that serve to mind them of such principles very effectual for holiness, as looking on the picture of death, or on a death's-head, keeping a coffin by them ready made, walking about among the graves, &c. But this is not that manner of living to God, whereof the apostle speaketh, when he saith, *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life that I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me*. If a man make use of these obliging principles, to stir him to go to Christ for strength to act holily; he walketh like one that hath received Christ as his
only

only life by faith, otherwise he walketh like other natural men. For the natural man may be brought to act by these principles, partly by natural light, and more fully by scripture light, without any true knowledge of the way of salvation by Christ, and as if Christ had never come into the world. And he may be strictly bound by them, and vehemently urged and pressed to holy duties; and yet all this while is left to his own natural strength or rather weakness, being not assured by any of these principles, that God will give him strength to help him in the performance of these duties; and can do nothing aright, until he get new life and strength in Christ by a more precious saving faith. There would be no need of a new life and strength by Christ, if these principles were sufficient to bring us to a holy conversation. Therefore this manner of practice is no better than *walking after the flesh*, according to our corrupt state, and a seeking to be made perfect in the flesh. No question but *Paul* was very diligent in it while he was a blind pharisee. Yea, the heathen philosophers might attain to it in some measure by the light of common reason. The devils have such principles, as they do believe assuredly, yet they are never the better for them. 'Tis a part of that natural wisdom whereby the world knew not God; not that wisdom of God in a mystery discovered in the gospel, which is the only sanctifying wisdom and power of God unto salvation. What can you produce but corruption, by pressing with motives to holiness, one that hath no soundness

in him, from the sole of the foot even to the head, only wounds and bruises, and putrified sores. He that is made truly sensible of his own vileness and deadness by nature, will despair of ever bringing himself to holiness by principles that afford him no life and strength, but only lay an obligation upon him, and urge and press him to duty. What are mere obligations to one that is dead in sin? While the soul is without spiritual life, sin is the more moved and enraged, by pressing and urging upon the soul the obligations of the law, and its commands. The motions of sin are by the law, and *sin taking occasion by the commandment, worketh in us all manner of concupiscence*, Rom. vii. 5, 7, 8. And yet these obliging principles are very good and excellent in this right gospel use of them, as the apostle saith of the law, that it is good, *if it be used lawfully*, 1 Tim. i. 8. The humbled sinner knoweth well his obligations; but it is life and strength that he wanteth, and despaireth of walking according to such obligations, until he get this life and strength by faith in Christ: Therefore these obliging principles do move him to go in the first place to Christ, that so we may be enabled to answer their end, by the strengthening and enlivening principles of God's grace in Christ. Some there are, that make use of gospel principles, only to oblige and urge to duty, without affording any life and strength for the performance, *as they that think Christ died and rose again to establish a new covenant of works for our salvation*, and to give us a pattern of good works

works by his own obedience, rather than to purchase life, obedience, and good works for us. Such as these do not understand, and receive the principles of the gospel rightly; but they pervert and abuse them, contrary to their true nature and design; and thereby they render them as ineffectual for their sanctification, as any other natural or legal principles.

5. Stir up and strengthen your self to perform the duties of holiness by a firm persuasion of your enjoyment of Jesus Christ and all spiritual and everlasting benefits through him. Set not your selves upon the performance of the law with any prevailing thoughts or apprehensions, that you are yet without an interest in Christ, and the love of God through him, under the *curse of the law*, the *power of sin and satan*, having no better portion than this present world; no better strength, than that which is in the purposes and resolutions of your own free-will. While such thoughts as these prevail, and influence your actions, 'tis evident that you walk according to the principles and practices of your *old natural state*; and you will be moved thereby to yield to the dominion of sin and satan, to withdraw your selves from God and godliness, as *Adam* was moved from the sight of his own nakedness, to *hide himself from God*, Gen. iii. 10. Therefore your way to a holy practice, is first to conquer and expel such unbelieving thoughts, by trusting confidently on Christ, and persuading your selves by faith, that his righteousness, spirit, glory, and all his spiritual benefits are yours,

and he dwelleth in you and you in him. In the might of this confidence you shall go forth to the performance of the law; and you will be strong against sin and satan, and *able to do all things through Christ that strengthens you.* This confident perswasion is of great necessity to the right framing and disposing our hearts to walk according to our new state in Christ. The life of faith principally consisteth in it. And herein it eminently appeareth, that faith is an hand not only to receive Christ, but also to work by him; and that it cannot be effectual for our sanctification, except it contain in it some assurance of our interest in Christ, as hath been shewed. Thus we act as those that are above the sphere of nature, advanced to union and fellowship with Christ. The apostle maintained in his heart, a perswasion that Christ had *loved him*, and given himself for him; and hereby he was enabled to live to God in holiness, through Christ living in him by faith. He teacheth us also, that we must maintain the like perswasion, if we would walk holily in Christ. We must know, that our *our old man is crucified with him*; and we must reckon our selves *dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord*, Rom. vi. 6. This is the means whereby we may be *filled with the spirit, strong in the Lord, and the power of his might*; which God would not require of us, if he had not appointed the means, *Eph. vi. 10.* Christ himself walked in a constant perswasion of his excellent state; he set the Lord always before him, and was perswaded, that because God was at *his right hand*, he should

should not be moved, *Psal. xvi. 8.* How should it be rationally expected, that a man should act according to this new state, without assurance that he is in it? 'Tis a rule of common prudence in all worldly callings and conditions, that every one must know and consider well his own state, lest he should act proudly above it, or sordidly below it; and it is a hard thing to bring some to a right estimate of their own worldly conditions. If the same rule were observed in spiritual things, doubtless the knowledge and persuasion of the glory and excellency of our new state in Christ, would more elevate the hearts of believers above all sordid slavery to their lusts, and enlarge them to run chearfully the ways of God's commandments: If christians knew their own strength better, they would enterprize greater things for the glory of God. But this knowledge is difficultly attained, it is only by faith and spiritual illumination; the best know but in part, and hence it is that the conversation of believers, falleth so much below their holy and heavenly calling.

6. Consider what endowments, privileges or properties of your new state are most meet, and forcible to incline and strengthen your heart to love God above all, and to renounce all sin, and to give up your self to universal obedience to his commands; and strive to walk in the persuasion of them, that you may attain to the practice of these great duties. I may well join these together, because to love the Lord with all our hearts, might and soul, is the first and great commandment which influenceth us to all obedience

ence, with a hatred and detestation of all sin, as it is contrary and hateful to God. The same effectual means that produceth the one, will also produce the other, and holiness chiefly consisteth in these. So the chief blessings of our holy state are most meet and forcible to enable us for the immediate performance of them, and are to be made use of to this end by faith. Particularly you must believe stedfastly that all your sins are blotted out, and that you are reconciled to God, and have access into his favour by the blood of Christ, and that he is your God and Father, and altogether Love to you, and your all-sufficient everlasting portion and happiness through Christ. Such apprehensions as these do present God as a very lovely object to our hearts, and do thereby allure and win our affections that cannot be forced by commands or threatenings, but must be sweetly won and drawn by allurements. We must not harbour any suspicion that God will prove a terrible, everlasting enemy to us, if we would love him; *for there is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment; he that feareth is not made perfect in love, we love him because he first loved us,* 1 John iv. 18, 19. David loved the Lord because he was persuaded that he was his strength, rock, fortress, his God *and the horn of salvation,* Psal. xviii. 1, 2. Love that causeth obedience unto the law, must proceed from a good conscience purged from sin; and this good conscience must proceed from *faith unfeigned,* whereby we apprehend the remission of our sins, our reconciliation with God

by the *merits of the blood of Christ*, 1 Tim. i. 5. *with Heb. ix. 14.* For the same end that your hearts may be rightly fitted and framed for the performance of these principal duties, the holy scripture directeth you to walk in the persuasion of other principal endowments of your new state: As, that you have fellowship with the Father and the Son, 1 John. i. 3. That you are the temple of the living God, 2 Cor. vi. 16. That you live by the spirit, Gal. v. 25. That you are called to holiness, and created in Christ Jesus unto good works? That God will sanctifie you wholly, and make you perfect in holiness at the last, 1 Thes. v. 23, 24. Eph. ii. 10. That your old man is crucified with Christ; and through him you are dead unto sin, and alive unto God; and being made free from sin, you are become the servants of righteousness and have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life, Rom. vi. 6, 22. You are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God, when Christ who is your shall appear, then shall you also appear with him in glory, Col. ii. 3, 4. Such persuasions as these, when they are deeply rooted and constantly maintained in our hearts do strongly arm and encourage us to practise universal obedience in opposition to every sinful lust: Because we look upon it not only as our duty, but our great privilege, to do all things through Christ strengthening of us; and God doth certainly work in us both to will and to do by these principles, because they properly belong to the Gospel, or New Testament, which is in the

Ministration of the Spirit, and the power of God unto salvation, 2 Cor. iii. 6, 8. Rom. i. 16.

7. For the performance of other duties of the Law, you are to consider not only these endowments, privileges and properties of your new state, which are meet and forcible, to enable you to the love of God and universal obedience, but also those that have a peculiar force and aptitude suitable to the special nature of such duties: And you must endeavour to assure your selves of them by faith, that you may be encouraged and strengthened to perform the duties. I shall give you some instances of this manner of practice in several duties, whereby you may the better understand how to guide your selves in the rest. And as to the duties of the first table, if you would draw near to God in a duty of his worship with a true heart, you must do it in full assurance of faith concerning your enjoyment of Christ, and his salvation. And would you perform the great duty of trusting on the Lord with all your heart, casting your care upon him, and committing the disposal of your self to him in all your concerns? Persuade your self through Christ, that God according to his promise, *will never fail you, nor forsake you; that he taketh a fatherly care of you, that he will withhold no good thing from you, and will make all things to work for your good*: And thus you will be strong and courageous in the practice of this duty: Whereas, if you live in a mere suspense concerning your interest in the privileges, you will be subject to *carnal fears, and carking cares*, in despite of your heart,
and

and you will be prone to trust on the arm of flesh, tho' your conscience tell you plainly, that in so doing you incur the hainous guilt of idolatry. Would you be strengthened to submit to the hand of God with a chearful patience, in bearing any affliction, and death it self? The way to fortifie your selves, is to believe assuredly, that your *afflictions that are but for a moment, do work for you a far more exceeding eternal weight of glory*; that Christ is your *gain in death and life*; that his *grace is sufficient for you*; and his *strength made perfect in your weakness*; and that he will *not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able*; and will at last *make you more than conquerors over all evil*. Until you attain to such persuasions as these, you will be prone to fret, and murmur under the burden of affliction, and to use indirect means to deliver your selves, notwithstanding the clearest convictions to the contrary. Would you limit you selves to the observation of God's own institutions in his worship? Believe that you are complete in Christ, and have all perfection of spiritual blessings in him; and that God will build you up in Christ by the ordinances of his own appointment. This will make you account his ordinances sufficient, and mens traditions and inventions needless in the worship of God: Whereas if you do not apprehend all fulness in Christ, you will be like the papists, prone to catch at every straw, and to multiply superstitious observations without end, for the supply of your spiritual wants. Would you confess your sins to God, pray to him

and praise him heartily for his benefits? Would you praise him for affliction as well as prosperity? Believe assuredly that God is faithful and just to forgive your sin through Christ, that you are made an holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praises, that are acceptable to God through Christ; and that God heareth your prayers and will fulfill them so far as they are good for you; and that all God's ways are mercy and truth toward you, whether he prosper or afflict you in this life. If you be altogether in doubt, or otherwise persuaded concerning these privileges, all your confessions, prayers and praises, will be heartless, lip labours, slavish or pharisaical works. In like manner you will be enabled to hear and receive the word as the word of God, and to meditate on it with delight, and you will be willing to know the strictness and spirituality of the commands of God, and to try and examine your ways impartially by them, *if you believe assuredly* that the word is the power of God to salvation; and that Christ is your great physician, *willing and able to heal you, be the case never so bad*: And where your sin abounds, his grace towards you doth so much the more abound: Whereas, without these comfortable apprehensions, all the works of hearing, meditation, self examination, will be but uncouth heartless works, and they will be performed negligently, and by halves, or hypocritically, and out of slavish fear, with much reluctance, without any good will, or readiness of mind. So also for the right receiving the Sacraments,

you

you will find yourselves much strengthened by believing that you may have communion with God and Christ in them, and that you have a great High-Priest to *bear the iniquity of your holy things*, and to make you for ever accepted before the Lord.

In the same way you are to apply yourselves to all duties towards your neighbour, required in the second table of the law, by acting in a persuasion of such privileges of your new estate, as have a peculiar force to encourage and strengthen you for the performance of them. That you may love your neighbour as your self, and do to him in all things as you would he should do to you, without partiality and selfseeking; that you may give him his due honour, and abstain from injuring him in his life, chastity, worldly estate, good name, or from coveting any thing that is his, according to the several commands in the second table of the decalogue: You must walk in a persuasion, not only that these things are just and equitable toward your fellow-creatures, and that you are strictly bound to the performance of them; but that they are the will of your heavenly Father, who hath begotten you according to his own image in righteousness and true holiness, and hath given you his spirit, that you may be like minded to him in all things: And that they are the mind of Christ, who dwelleth in you, and you in him: That God and Christ are kind, tender hearted, long-suffering, full of goodness to men, whether good or bad, friends or enemies, poor or rich; and that Christ came into

into the world, *not to destroy but to save*; and that you are of the same spirit; that the injuries done to you by your neighbours can do you no harm; and you need not seek any good for your selves by injuring them, because you have all desirable happiness in Christ; and all things, tho' intended by your enemies for your hurt, certainly work for your good through Christ. Such apprehensions as these, wrought in us by the spirit of faith, do certainly beget in us a right frame of spirit, thoroughly furnished for every good work towards our neighbour. Likewise, your hearts will be *purified to unfeigned love of the brethren in Christ*, and you will walk toward them with all *lowliness, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another in love*, if you maintain a stedfast belief and persuasion of those manifold bonds of love whereby you are inseparably joined with them through Christ; as particularly, *that there is one body, and one spirit, one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all*. Finally, you will be able to *abstain from all fleshly and worldly lusts, that war against the soul, and hinder all godliness*, by an assured persuasion, not merely that gluttony, drunkenness, lechery, are filthy swinish abominations; and that the pleasures, profits, and honours of the world are vain, empty things; but that you are *crucified to the flesh, and the world, and quickned, raised and sit in heavenly places thro' Christ*; and that you have pleasures,

profits,

profit
thing
pare
the t
chile
ness
to pr
worl
enou
the m
of yo
ed in
new
comm
endow
perat
you
serve
dienc
mann
fortes
work
attain
8.
all h
able
thing
own
ciouss
which
the m
ings,
fall sh
liness

profits, honours in Christ, to which the best things in the world are not worthy to be compared; and that you are *members of Christ, the temple of his Spirit, citizens of heaven, children of the day, not of night, nor of darkness*; So that 'tis below your state and dignity to practise *deeds of darkness*, and mind *fleshly worldly things*. Thus I have given Instances enough to stir you up to acquaint yourselves with the manifold endowments, privileges, properties of your new state in Christ, as they are discovered in the Gospel of your salvation, whereby the new nature is fitted for holy operations; as the common nature of man is furnished with the endowments necessary for those functions and operations to which it is designed; and also to stir you up to make use of them by faith, as they serve to strengthen you either for universal obedience, or for particular duties: And by this manner of walking, your hearts will be comforted and established in every good word and work, and you will grow in holiness, until you attain to perfection in Jesus Christ.

8. If you endeavour to grow in grace and in all holiness, trust assuredly that God will enable you by this manner of walking to do every thing that is necessary for his glory and your own everlasting salvation, and that he will graciously accept of that obedience through Christ, which you are enabled to perform according to the measure of your faith, and pardon your failings, though you offend in many things, and fall short of many others, as to degrees of holiness and high acts of obedience. And therefore

fore attempt not the performance of duty in any other way, though you cannot yet attain to do so much as you would in this way. This is a necessary instruction to establish us in the life of faith, that the sense of our manifold failings and defects, may not move us either to despair, or to return to the use of carnal principles and means, for help against our corruptions, as accounting this way of living and acting by faith, to be insufficient for our sanctification and salvation. The apostle *Paul* exhorts the *Galatians* to walk in the spirit; *though the flesh lusts against the spirit, so that they cannot do the things that they would*, Gal. v. 16, 17. We are to know that though the law requireth of us the utmost perfection of holiness, yet the gospel maketh an allowance for our weakness, and Christ is so meek and lowly in heart, that he accepteth of that which our weak faith can attain to by his grace, and doth not exact or expect any more of us for his glory and our salvation, until we grow stronger in grace. God shewed his great indulgence to his people under the Old Testament, that Moses the law-giver suffered them, because of the hardness of their hearts, to put away their wives, though from the beginning it was not so, Mat. xix. 8, and also in tolerating the customary practice of Polygamy. Tho' Christ will not tolerate the continuance of such practices in his church, since his spirit is more plentifully poured forth under the gospel, yet he is as forward as ever, to bear with the failings of his weak saints that
desire

desire to obey him sincerely. *We have another instance of God's indulgence*, more full to our present purpose, in his *commanding* that the *fearful* and *faint-hearted*, should not be forced to enter into battel against their enemies, but suffered to *return home to their houses*: Though fighting in battle against their enemies, without fear and faint heartedness, was a duty that God did much exercise his people in, at that time, *Deut. xx. 3, 8*. So under the gospel, though it be an eminent part of Christ's service, to endure the greatest fight of afflictions and death it self, couragiously for his name sake, yet if any be so weak in faith that they have not sufficient courage to venture into the battel, no doubt but Christ alloweth them to make use of any honest means, whereby they may escape the hands of persecutors with safety to their holy profession: He will accept them in this weaker kind of service, and will approve of them better than if they should hazard a denial of his name, by venturing themselves upon the tryal of martyrdom, when they might have escaped it. *Peter* came off with sin and shame, by *venturing beyond the measure of his faith*, into the hands of his persecutors, when he went after Christ to the high-priest's hall; whereas he should rather have made use of that indulgent dismission that Christ gave to him and the rest of his disciples: *Let these go their way*, John xviii. 8. Christ dealeth with his people as a good careful shepherd, that will over-drive his sheep: *He gathereth his lambs with his arms, and carrieth them in his Bosom,*

son, and will gently lead those that are with young, 11a. xl. 14. He would not have his disciples urged rigorously upon the duty of fasting, when their spirits were unfit for it, because he knew that imposing duties above their strength, is like putting a piece of new cloath into an old garment, and new wine into old bottles; which spoileth all at last, Mat. ix. 14, 17. That precept of Solomon, *Be not righteous overmuch*, Eccl. vii. 16. is very useful and necessary, if rightly understood. We are to beware of being too rigorous in exacting righteousness of our selves and others beyond the measure of faith and grace. Overdoing commonly proveth undoing. Children that venture on their feet beyond their strength, have many a fall; and so have babes in Christ, when they venture unnecessarily upon such duties as are beyond the strength of their faith. We should be content at present to do the best that we can according to the measure of the gift of Christ, though we know that others are enabled to do much better; and we are not to despise the day of small things, but to praise God that he worketh in us any thing that is well-pleasing in his sight, hoping that he will sanctifie us throughout, and bring us at last to perfection of holiness through Jesus Christ our Lord. And we should carefully observe in all things, that good lesson of the apostle, *not to think of our selves more highly than we ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith*, Rom. xii. 3.

DIREC

Endea
all
the
in t
ing.
Fai

TH
on
on, bec
myster
by the
preher
treated
things

Fi
tually
the use
attaini
made
needfu
noranc
up with
themse
that th
ing H
that ru
gether

D I R E C T I O N X I I I .

Endeavour diligently to make the right use of all means appointed in the word of God, for the obtaining and practising holiness, only in this way of believing in Christ and walking in him, according to your new state by Faith.

E X P L I C A T I O N .

THIS might have been added to the instructions in the explication of the former direction, because its use is the same to guide us in the mysterious manner of practising holiness in Christ, by the life of faith. But the weight and comprehensiveness of it, maketh it worthy to be treated of by it self, as a distinct direction. Two things are observable in it :

FIRST, That though all Holiness be effectually attained by the life of faith in Christ, yet the use of any means appointed in the word for attaining and promoting holiness, is not hereby made void, but rather established. This is needful to be observed against the pride and ignorance of some carnal gospellers, who being puffed up with a conceit of their feigned faith, imagine themselves to be in such a state of perfection, that they are above all ordinances, except singing *Hallelujahs*: And also against the *Papists* that run into the contrary extreme, by heaping together a multitude of means of holiness which
God

God never commanded, neither ever came they into his heart; and that slander the protestant doctrine of faith and free grace, as if it tended to destroy all diligent use of the means of holiness and salvation, and to breed up a company of lazy solifidians. We do indeed assert and profess that a true and lively faith in Christ, is alone sufficient and effectual through the grace of God, to receive Christ and all his fulness, so far as is necessary in this life for our justification, sanctification and eternal salvation: But yet we also assert and profess, that several means are appointed of God, for the begetting, maintaining and increasing this faith, and the acting and exercising it, in order to the attainment of its End; and that these means are to be used diligently, which are mentioned in the sequel. True believers find by experience, that their faith needeth such helps, and they that think themselves above any need of them, do reject the counsel of God against themselves, like to those proud *Pharisees* and *Lawyers*, that thought it a thing beneath them, and *refused to be baptized of John*, *Luk. vii. 30.* yet we account no means necessary or lawful to be used for the attainment of holiness, besides those that are appointed by God in his word. We know that holiness is *a part of* our salvation, and therefore they that think men may, or can invent any means effectual for the attainment of it, do ascribe their salvation partly to men, and rob God of his Glory, in being our only Saviour; and they do thereby plainly shew, That though they *draw nigh unto God with their mouth and ho-*

nour him with their lips, yet their hearts are far from him; and in vain do they worship him, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, Mat. xv. 7, 8, 9.

THE Second thing observable and principally design'd in this direction, is the right manner of using all the means of holiness, for the obtaining and practising it in no other way besides that of believing in Christ, and walking in him according to our new state by faith, which hath been already demonstrated to be the only way whereby we may effectually attain to this great end. We must use them as helps to the life of faith, in its beginning, continuance and growth; and as instruments subservient to faith, the principal instrument, in all its acts and exercises whereby the soul receiveth Christ, and walketh in all holiness by him. We must beware lest we use them rather in opposition, than in subordination to the way of sanctification and salvation by free grace in Christ, through faith; and lest by our abuse of them, they be made rather hindrances, than helps to our faith. We must not idolize any of the means, and put them into the place of Christ, as the *Papists* do, by *trusting in them*; as if they were effectual to confer grace to the soul, by the work that is done in the use of them. Neither may we use them as works of righteousness, to be performed as conditions for the procuring the favour of God, and the salvation of Christ; Neither must they be accounted so absolutely necessary to salvation, as if a true faith were void and of none effect.

T

effect, when we are debared from the enjoyment of several of them. The holy Scriptures with all the means of grace appointed therein, are *able to make us wise unto salvation*, no other way than *by faith in Jesus Christ*, 2 Tim. iii. 15. and therefore our wise endeavour must be, not to use them in any opposition to the grace of God in Christ. For God's ordinances are like the cherubims of glory, made with their faces looking towards the mercy-seat: They are made to guide us to Christ for salvation by faith alone. If any turn them to another use, it is a great violation of divine institutions, as if any sacrilegious person had presumed to turn the faces of the cherubims from the mercy-seat some other way. This right use of the means of grace, is a point wherein many are ignorant, that use them with great zeal and diligence, and thereby they do not only lose their labour and the benefit of the means, but also they wrest and pervert them to their own destruction. The Jews under the law of Moses, enjoyed many more ordinances of divine worship than we do under the gospel; but their table became their snare, and they fell miserably from God and Christ, because the veil of ignorance was upon their hearts that they could not look to the end of those ordinances, even to the Lord Jesus Christ; *And they sought not salvation by faith, but by the ordinances as works of righteousness, and by other works of the law; for they stumbled at the stumbling stone*, Rom. ix. 31, 32; and x. 4, 5. 2 Cor. iii. 13, 14. That you may not stumble and fall by the same pernicious

error,

error, I shall shew particularly, how several of the principal means of holiness appointed in the word of God, are to be made use of in that right manner expressed in the direction.

I. We must endeavour diligently to know the word of God contained in the holy scripture, and to improve it to this end, *That we may be made wise unto salvation thro' faith, which is in Christ Jesus*, 2 Tim. ii. 15. Other means of salvation are necessary to the more abundant well-being of our faith, and of our new state in Christ; but this is absolutely necessary to the very being thereof; because faith cometh by hearing the word of God, and receiveth Christ as manifested by the word, as I have before proved. *Rahab the Cannanite* was justified by faith before she had any visible communion with the church in any of God's ordinances; yet not without the word of God, even the same word for substance, which was written in the scriptures, and was then extant in the books of *Moses*: Though that word was not brought to her by any book of holy scripture, nor by the preaching of any holy minister, but by the report of the heathens, *Josh. ii. 9, 11*. But here our great work must be to get such a knowledge of the word, as is necessary and sufficient to guide us in receiving Christ, and walking in him by faith. You must not be of their minds that think the knowledge of the ten commandments to be sufficient to salvation, or that would have mysteries to remain hid from the understanding of the vulgar, and nothing to be preached to

them but what they can readily assent to, and receive by the light that is in all men; of which mind it may be some ministers are, who unwittingly agree with the *Quakers* in a fundamental of their heresy. But you must endeavour chiefly to know the mystery of *the Father and the Son*, as it is discovered in the gospel, *Wherein are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, ol. ii. 2, 3. *Which to know is life eternal, and the ignorance of it, is death eternal*, Jhn xvii. 3. 2 Cor. x 3. You must know that *Christ is the end of the law*, Rom. x. 4. and therefore you must endeavour to know the commands of the law, not that you may be enabled by that knowledge to practise them immediately, and so to procure salvation by your works; but rather by your knowledge of them, you may be made sensible of your inability to perform them, and of the enmity that is in your heart against them, and the wrath that you are under for breaking them, and the impossibility of being saved by your own works, that so you may fly to Christ for refuge, and trust only to the free grace of God for justification and strength, to fulfil the law acceptably through Christ in your conversation. And for this end you must endeavour to learn the utmost strictness of the commands, the exact perfection and spiritual purity which they require, that you may be the more convinced of sin, and stirred up to seek unto Christ for remission of sin, for purity of heart, and spiritual obedience, and be brought nearer to the enjoyment of him. As Christ testified that the *Scribe*, who understood the greatness of that command of

loving

loving the Lord with all the heart and soul, was not far from the kingdom of God, Mat. xii. 34. The most effectual knowledge for your salvation, is to understand these two points; the desperate sinfulness and misery of your own natural condition, and the alone sufficiency of the grace of God in Christ, for your salvation, that you may be abased as to the flesh, and exalted in Christ alone. And for the better understanding these two main points, you should learn how the first Adam was the figure of the second, Rom. v. 14. How sin and death came upon all the natural seed of the first Adam, by his disobedience in eating the forbidden fruit, and how righteousness and everlasting life come upon all the spiritual seed of the second Adam, Jesus Christ, by his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. You also should learn the true difference between the two covenants, the old and the new, or the law and the gospel; that the former shutteth us up under the guilt and power of sin, and the wrath of God and his curse, by its rigorous terms, *Do all the commandments and live, and cursed are you if you do them not, and fail in the least Point.* The latter openeth the gates of righteousness and life to all believers, (i. e. the new covenant) by its gracious terms, *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and live, i. e. All your sins shall be forgiven, and holiness and glory shall be given to you freely by his merit and spirit.* Furthermore, you should learn the gospel principles that you are to walk by, for the attainment of holiness in Christ. And here I shall mind you

T 3

par-

particularly that you would be a good proficient in christian learning, if you get a good understanding of the 6th and 7th chapters of the apostle *Paul* to the *Romans*, where the powerful principles of sanctification are purposely treated of, and differenced from those weak and ineffectual principles, which we are most naturally prone to walk by: I need not particularly commend any other points of religion to your learning; for if you get the knowledge of these principal points which I have mentioned, and improve it to a right end, which is to live and walk by faith in Christ, your own renewed mind will covet the knowledge of all other things that appertain to life and godliness; *And if in any thing you be otherwise minded than is according to saving truth, God shall reveal even this unto you*, Phil. iii. 15. Yet let me caution you, least instead of gaining Christ by your knowledge, you rather lose him by putting your knowledge in the place of Christ, and trusting on it for your salvation. One cause of the *Jews* perishing was, *that they rested in a form of knowledge, and of the truth in the law*, Rom. ii. 20. And doubtless all that many christians will gain by their knowledge in the end, will only be to be beaten with more stripes, because they place their religion and salvation, chiefly in the knowledge of their Lord's will, and in their ability to talk and dispute of it, *without preparing themselves to do according thereunto*, Luke xii. 47. Much less are you to place your religion and hope of salvation, in a daily task of reading chapters, or repeating sermons, without understanding more than

than the *Papists* do their lessons in the latin mass, and canonical hours; as sad experience sheweth that many seemingly devout and frequent hearers of the word, do notwithstanding remain in lamentable and wonderful ignorance of the saving truth; and in them is fulfilled the prophecy of *Isaias*, *That in hearing they shall hear and not understand, and in seeing they shall see, &c.* *Mat. xiii. 14, 15*

2. Another means to be used diligently for the promoting the life of faith, is examination of our state and ways according to the word, whether we be at present in a state of sin and wrath, or of grace and salvation; that if we be in a state of sin, we may know our sickness, and come to the great Physician, *while it is called to day*: And if we be in a state of grace, we may know that we are of the truth, and assure our hearts before God, with the greater confidence, by the testimony of a good conscience, *1 John iii. 19, 21.* that so our hearts may be more strongly comforted by faith, and established in every good work; and that if our ways be evil, *we may turn from them to the Lord our God through Christ, without whom none cometh to the Father, Lam. ii. 40. John. xiv. 6.* But your great care in this work of self-examination, must be to perform it in such a manner, that it may not hinder and destroy the life of faith, as it doth in many, instead of promoting it. Therefore beware lest you trust upon your self examination, rather than upon Christ: As some do that think they have made their peace with God, merely because they have examined

themselves upon their sick bed, or before the receiving of the Lord's Supper, though they have found themselves stark nought, and do not depend on Christ to make them better, but on their own deceitful purposes and resolutions. Think not that you must begin this work with doubting whether God will extend mercy to you, and save you, and that you must leave this a question wholly under debate, until you have found out how to resolve it by self examination. This is a common and very pernicious error in the very foundation of this work, which is hereby laid in the great sin of unbelief, which as soon as it prevaileth, doth by its great influence, dash and obscure all inward gracious qualifications of peace, hope, joy, love to God and his people, before they be at all tryed whether they can give any good evidence for their salvation. And it makes people willing to think their own qualifications better than they are, lest they should fall into an utter despair of their salvation; and thus it wholly marreth the good work of self examination, and maketh it destructive to our souls; *For to them that are defiled and unbelieving, there is nothing pure*, Tit. i. 15. You should rather begin the work with much assurance of faith, that though you find your heart never so wicked and reprobate at present, (as many of God's choicest servants have found) yet the door of mercy is open for you, and that God *will certainly save you for ever, if you put your trust in his Grace thro' Christ*. I have formerly shewed that this confident perswasion, is of the nature of saving faith, and that we have suffi-

suffi-
the
see
fica
fider
to fin
to ju
thin
can
holy
them
may
at pr
differ
God
a vile
and w
Salva
resolv
Christ
by sel
many
wheth
for yo
any fa
faith i
not fir
if you
the un
teousne
and yo
aminin
pardon
it be v

sufficient Ground for it in the free promises of the gospel; when we walk in darkness and can see no light shining forth in our gracious qualifications. If we begin the work with this confidence, it will make us impartial and not afraid to find out the worst of our selves, and willing to judge that *our hearts are deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked beyond what we can find out*, Jer. xvii. 9. And if we *have any holy qualifications*, this confidence will preserve them in their vigour and brightness, that they may be able to give clear evidence, that we are at present in a state of grace. Mark well the difference between these two questions, whether God will graciously accept and save me though a vile sinner through Christ, as before was said, and whether I am already brought into a state of *Salvation*? The former of these I say, is to be resolved affirmatively by a confident faith in Christ; the latter only is to be inquired into by self examination. Mispend not your time as many do, in poring upon your hearts, to find whether you be good enough to trust on Christ for your salvation, or to find whether you have any faith, before you dare be so bold as to act faith in Christ. But know that though you cannot find that you have any faith or holiness, yet if you will *now believe on him that justifieth the ungodly, it shall be accounted to you for righteousness*, Rom. iv. 5. And if you love Christ and your own soul, mispend not your time in examining whether you have committed the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, except it be with a full purpose to assure your self more
and

and more, that you are not guilty thereof ; for any doubtfulness in this point, will but harden you in unbelief. Remember well that the question to be resolved, is, whether you be at present in a state of grace? And to resolve it, you must be willing to know the best of your self as well as the worst: And you must not think that humility bindeth you to overlook your good qualifications, and to take notice only of your corruptions. But your great work must be, to find whether there be not some drop of saving grace in the ocean of your corruption? And it will consist well with humility to take notice of, and own any spark of true holiness that is in you, because the praise and glory of it belongeth not to you, *but to God*, Phil. i. 11. And you must try inherent grace by the touch-stone, not by the measure; by its nature, *not its degree*; not denying any lustings of the spirit in you, because the strong lustings of the flesh against the spirit; nor denying that you are spiritual in some degree, and babes in Christ; because you find your selves carnal in a more prevailing degree, *and the old man bigger than the new*, Gal. v. 17. 1 Cor. ii. 1. Especially you are to examine and prove whether you be in the faith; for if you make sure of this, you make sure of all the things that pertain to life and godliness; and if you doubt of this, you will certainly doubt of the truth of any other qualifications, and will suspect them to be merely carnal and counterfeit; because it is a known truth, *that to the unbelieving there is nothing pure*, and that all that have not truly received Christ

Christ by faith, are at present in an unregenerate state, though they seem never so pure and godly, *2 Cor. xiii. 5. Tit. i. 15.* And let not the issue of this tryal depend at all upon your knowledge of the time when, or of the sermon, conference, or place of scripture, by which you were first converted to the faith; though that is good to know too, if it may be. And some who have formerly lived in gross ignorance, or in a manifest opposition to true faith and holiness, may know such circumstances of their conversion, and may reflect upon them comfortably, as the apostle *Paul* did, who was turned of a sudden from his persecuting rage, to be a disciple and an apostle of Christ; yet others, sincere believers, may be wholly ignorant of them, as *John the Baptist, who was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb*, *Luk. i. 15.* and they that have been trained up religiously, and know the holy scripture from their childhood as *Timothy*, *2 Tim. iii. 15.* Yea, and many that are first turned from gross ignorance and profaneness, to some external reformation, and then in process of time, brought nearer to the kingdom of heaven, by insensible degrees, before they be really new begotten by the spirit of faith. There are also some that deceive their souls, by imagining they know at what time, and by what text of scripture they were converted, and can make large discourses of the workings of God upon their hearts, and are prone to talk unseasonably with vain glorying of their own experiences, when at last, all their experiences are not sufficient to evidence that they ever attained to the least measure of true saving faith.

There-

Therefore that we may not unjustly condemn or justify our faith, by proceeding on insufficient evidences in its tryal, *our best way is to examine it by the inseparable properties of a true saving faith, by putting to our selves such questions as these*; are we made thoroughly sensible of our sinfulness, and of the deadness and misery of our natural state, so as to despair absolutely of ever attaining to any righteousness, holiness or true happiness while we continue in it? Are the eyes of our understanding enlightened, to see the excellency of Christ, and the alone sufficiency and all sufficiency of his grace for our salvation? Do we prefer the enjoyment of him above all things, and desire to with our whole heart, as our only happiness, whatsoever we may suffer for his sake? Do we desire with our whole heart, to be delivered from the power and practice of sin, as well as from the wrath of God and the pains of hell? Do our hearts come to Christ and lay hold on him for salvation, by trusting him only, and endeavouring to trust on him confidently, notwithstanding all fears and doubts that assault us? If you find in your self a faith that hath these properties, though as small as a grain of mustard-seed, and opposed with much unbelief and manifold corruptions in your soul, you may conclude that you are in a state of salvation at present, and that your remaining work is to continue and grow in it more and more, and to walk worthy of it. You should also examine the *fruits* of your faith, and try whether you can *shew your faith by your works*,

as you
be sur
conce
noted
breed
qualif
you n
cerity
doubt
wheth
and
but a
influe
hell,
your v
ples t
gospel
God h
he ha
life, a
depend
rit acc
the N
spirit
tify u
Take
your s
signs o
Partic
sed fr
1 Joh
can in
that b
the tr

as you are taught, *James ii. 18.* that you may be sure not to be deceived in your judgment concerning it. And though it be true, as I have noted, that doubts concerning your faith will breed doubting concerning the sincerity of other qualifications that are fruits thereof, yet possibly you may get such clear evidence of your sincerity, as may overcome and expel all your doubts. And here you are not only to enquire whether your inclinations, purposes, affections and actions be materially good and holy, but also by what principles they are bred and influenced? Whether it be by slavish fears of hell, and mercenary hopes of getting heaven by your works which are legal and carnal principles that can never breed true holiness; or by gospel principles, as by love to God, because God hath loved you first, and to Christ, because he hath dyed; and by the hope of eternal life, as the free gift of God through Christ, and dependence on God to sanctify you by his spirit according to his promises. Remember that the New Testament *is the ministration of the spirit*; 2 *Cor. iii. 6.* and the spirit will sanctify us, not by legal, but by gospel principles. Take notice farther, that you need not trouble your self to find out a multitude of marks and signs of true grace, if you can find a few good ones: Particularly you may know, *That you are passed from death to life, if you love the brethren*, 1 *John iii. 14.* *i. e.* if you love all whom you can in charity judge to be true believers, and that because they are true believers, and for the truth sake that dwell in them. *As Solomon*

lomon discerned the true mother of the child, by her affection towards the child; so the mother grace of faith, may be discerned by the love that it breeds in us, toward all true believers. To conclude this point, happy are you if you can find so much evidence of the fruits of your faith, as may enable you to express your sincerity in these moderate terms, *Pray for us, for we trust we have a good conscience in all things, willing to live honestly*, Heb. xiii. 18.

3. Meditation on the word of God is of very great use and advantage, for the attainment and practice of holiness through faith in Christ. It is a duty whereby the soul doth feed and ruminate upon the word as its spiritual food, and digesteth it, and turneth it into nourishment, whereby we are strengthened for every good work. Our souls are satisfied therewith as with *marrow and fatness*: When we remember God upon our beds, and *meditate on him in the night watches*, Psal. lxxiii. 5, 6. The new nature may well be called the *mind*, Rom. vii. 25. because it liveth and acteth, by minding, and meditating on *spiritual things*. Therefore it is a duty to be practised, not only at some limited times, but *all the day*, Psal. cxix. 97. *yea, day and night*, Psal. i. 2. even in our ordinary employments at home and abroad. An habitual knowledge of the word will not profit us, without an active minding it by frequent meditation. Some think that much preaching of the word is not needful, where a people are already brought to the knowledge of those

those things that are *necessary to salvation*. But they that are regenerated by the word, find by experience, that their spiritual life is maintained and encreased by often minding the same word: And therefore as *new born babes, they desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby*, 1 Pet. ii. 2. and would by the preachers be put often in remembrance of the same things, that they may feed upon them by meditation, tho' they know them already and are established in the present truth, 2 Pet. i. 12. But here our greatest skill, and chiefest concernment lies, in practising this duty in such a manner, as that it may be subservient, and not at all opposite to the life of faith. We must not rely upon the performance of a daily task of meditation, as a work of righteousness for the procurement of the favour of God, instead of relying on the righteousness of Christ, as indeed we are prone to do, to catch at any straw rather than to trust only on the free grace of God in Christ for our salvation. And the end of our meditation must not be mere speculation and knowledge of the truth, but rather the vigorous pressing it upon our consciences, and the stirring up our hearts and affections to the practice of it: And in stirring up our selves to holy practice, we must warrily observe how far the several parts of the truth of God are powerful and effectual for the attainment of this end, that we may make use of them accordingly. We must not imagine as too many do, yea, and some great masters in the art of meditation, that we can bring our hearts effectually to the love of God

God and holiness and can work strange alterations, and frame in our hearts any holy qualifications or virtue, merely by working in our selves strong apprehensions of God's eternal power and God-head, his sovereign authority, omniscience, perfect holiness, exact justice, the equity of his law, and reasonableness of our obedience to it; the unspeakable happiness prepared for the godly, and misery for the wicked to all eternity. Meditation on such things as these is indeed very useful to press upon our consciences the strictness of our obligation to holy duties, and to move us to go by faith to Christ, for life and strength to perform them. But that we may receive this life and strength whereby we are enabled for immediate performance, we must meditate believingly on Christ's saving benefits, as they are discovered in the Gospel, which is the only doctrine which is the power of God to our salvation, and whereby the quickning spirit is ministered to us, and that is able to build us up, and give us an inheritance among all them which are sanctified, Rom. i. 16. 2 Cor. iii. 6. Acts xx. 32. You must take special care to act faith in your meditation, mix the word of God's Grace with it, or else it will not profit you, Heb. iv. 2. and if you set the loving kindness of God frequently before your eyes, by meditating on it believingly, you will be strengthened to walk in the truth, Psal. xxvi. 3. and by beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord you will be changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord, 2 Cor. ii. 18. This kind of meditation

tation
guide
nor r
vulga
thoug
them
your
with
by an
never
cordin

4.
of gre
made
tion, t
fai b,
11. B
a seal
the ca
by the
that tr
nant o
the L
justific
they ti
baptis
and ab
baptism
but if
is ma
baptise
of that
nothing
It are

tation is sweet and delightful to those that are guided to it by the Spirit of faith, and it needs not the help of such artificial methods as the vulgar cannot easily learn: You may let your thoughts run in it at liberty, without confining them to any rules of method; you will find your souls much enlivened by it, and enriched with the grace of God which cannot be effected by any other kind of meditation, though it be never so methodical, and curiously framed according to the rules of art.

4. The sacrament of *Baptism* must needs be of great use to promote the life of faith, if it be made use of according to its nature and institution, *because it is a seal of the righteousness of faith, as circumcision* was formerly, *Rom. iv.*

11. But then we must take heed of making it a seal of the contrary righteousness of works, as the carnal *Jew* did, that sought to be justified by the law of *Moses*, and as many christians do, that transform the new covenant into a covenant of works, requiring sincere obedience to all the Laws of Christ, as the condition of our justification; into which new devised covenant, they think themselves to be entred by their baptism. I may say of baptism thus perverted and abused, as the *Apostle* saith of *circumcision*, baptism verily profiteth if thou keep the law, but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy baptism is made no baptism, *Rom. ii. 26.* If thou be baptised, so long as thou continuest in the abuse of that holy ordinance, Christ shall profit you nothing, Christ is become of no effect to you; *Ye are fallen from grace, Gal. v. 2, 4.* Beware

also of making an idol of baptism, and putting it in the place of Christ, as the *Papists* do, who hold that it conferreth grace by the very work that is performed in the administration of it; and as many ignorant people do, that trust rather on their baptism, than on Christ; like the *Pharisees*, who placed their confidence on circumcision, and other external privileges, *Phil. iii. 4, 5.* We are to know that God is not well pleased with many that are baptised, *1 Cor. x. 2, 5.* and the time will come when he will punish the baptised with the unbaptised, as well as the *circumcised with the uncircumcised*, *Jer. ix. 25.* Beware also of advancing baptism to an equal partnership with faith in your salvation, as some do, who account all baptism null and void, besides that which is administered to persons grown up to years of discretion, and they that refuse to be re-baptised at those years, are to be accounted aliens from the true church, from Christ and his salvation, notwithstanding all their faith in Christ. If the baptism of infants were null and void, yet the want of true baptism would be no damning matter to those that are otherwise persuaded. Circumcision was as necessary as baptism in its time, and yet the *Israelites* omitted it for the space of forty years in the wilderness, without fearing that any would fall short of salvation for want of it, *Josh. v. 6, 7.* Many precious saints in the primitive times of persecution, have gone to heaven through a baptism of suffering for the name of Christ, before they had opportunity to be baptised with water: And in those ancient times, when the custom of

del
to
by
or
is r
of t
fitt
pro
ted
que
do y
feld
of c
cere
bapt
of it
than
fin is
ordin
their
admi
ought
all oc
into w
this
to?
streng
hold
fulfil
memb
baptis
Moses,
as Job
tance,

deferring baptism too much prevailed, we are not to think, that none were in a state of salvation by faith in Christ, that deferred that Ordinance, or neglected it. Take notice farther, that it is not sufficient to avoid the pernicious errors of those that pervert baptism, contrary to its institution, but you must be also diligent in improving it to the ends for which it was instituted. And here let me desire you to put the question seriously to your souls, what good use do you make of your baptism? How often, or seldom do you think upon it? The vulgar sort of christians, yea it may be feared, many sincere converts, do so little think upon their own baptism, and study to make a due improvement of it, that 'tis of no more profit to their souls, than if they never had been baptised; yea, their sin is the more aggravated by rendring such an ordinance of none effect to their souls, through their own gross neglect. Though baptism be administered to us but once in our lives, yet we ought frequently to reflect upon it, and upon all occasions to put the question to our selves, into what were we baptised? *Acts* xix. 3. What this Ordinance seals? What did it engage us to? And accordingly, we must stir up and strengthen our selves by our baptism, to lay hold on the grace which it seals to us, and to fulfil its engagements. We should often remember, that we are made Christ's disciples by baptism, and engaged to hear him rather than *Moses*, and to believe on him for our salvation; as *John* baptised with the baptism of repentance, saying to the people, *That they should*

believe on him that should come after him, i. e. on Christ Jesus. We should remember, that our baptism sealed our putting on of Christ, and our being the children of God by faith in Christ, and our being no longer under the former school-master the law, *Gal. iii. 25, 26, 27.* And that it sealed to us the *putting off the body of sin*, and our *burial and resurrection with Christ by faith*, and the *forgiving of our trespasses.* *Col. ii. 12, 13.* Our being made *members of one body of Christ*, and to *drink into one spirit*, *1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.* We may find by such things as these, which are more fully discovered in the gospel, that it is the proper nature and tendency of baptism, to guide us to faith in Christ alone for remission of sins, holiness, and all salvation, by union and fellowship with him, and that a diligent improvement of this ordinance must needs be of great advantage to the life of faith.

5. The sacrament of the Lord's supper is as a spiritual feast to nourish our faith, and to strengthen us to walk in all holiness by Christ living and working in us; if it be used according to the pattern which Christ gave us in its first institution, recorded by three evangelists, *Mat. xxvi. 26. Mark. xiv. 22, 24. Luke xxii. 19, 20.* and was extraordinarily revealed from heaven by Christ himself to the apostle *Paul*, *1 Cor. xi. 23, 25.* that we might be the more obliged and stirred up to the exact observation of it. Its end is not only that we may remember Christ's death in the history, but in the mystery of it; as that his body was broken for us, that his blood

is

is the blood of the new testament or covenant
shed for us, and for many for the remission of
 sins, that so we may receive and enjoy all the
 promises of the new covenant which are recorded,
Heb. viii. 10, 11, 12. Its end is to mind us that
 Christ's body and blood are bread and drink,
 even all-sufficient food to nourish our souls to
 everlasting life, and that we ought to take, and
 eat, and drink him by faith, and to assure us that
 when we *truly believe on him, he is as really*
and closely united to us by his spirit, as the food
which we eat and drink is united to our bodies.
 Christ himself, *John vi.* doth more fully explain
 this mystery. Furthermore, this sacrament doth not
 only put us in mind of the spiritual blessings where-
 with we are blessed in Christ, and our enjoyment of
 them by faith, but also it is a mean and instru-
 ment, whereby God doth really exhibit and give
 forth Christ and his salvation to true believers,
 and whereby he doth stir up, and strengthen be-
 lievers to receive and feed upon Christ by present
 actings of faith, while they partake of the out-
 ward elements. When Christ saith *eat, drink,*
this is my body, this is my blood, no less can be
 meant, than that Christ doth as truly give his
 body and blood to true believers in that ordi-
 nance, as the bread and cup; and they do as
 truly receive it by faith. As if a prince invest a
 subject in some honourable office, by delivering
 to him a staff, sword or signet, and say to him,
 take this staff, sword or signet, this is such an
 office or preferment; or if a father should de-
 liver a deed for conveyance of land to his son,
 and say, *take it as thy own, this is such a*
 U 3 *farm*

farm or mannor; how can such expressions import any thing less, in common sense and reason, than a present, gift, and conveyance of the offices, preferments and lands, by and with those outward signs. Therefore the apostle Paul asserteth, *that the bread in the Lord's supper, is the communion of the body of Christ, and the cup is the communion of his blood*, 1 Cor. x. 16. which sheweth that Christ's body and blood *are really* communicated to us, and we *do really partake of them*, as well as of the bread and cup. The chief excellency and advantage of this ordinance is, that it is not *only a figure and resemblance* of our living upon a crucified Saviour, but also a precious instrument, whereby Christ the bread and drink of life, *is really conveyed to us, and received by us through faith*. This makes it to be a love-token, worthy of that ardent affection towards us, which filled Christ's heart at the time when he instituted it, when he was on the point of finishing his greatest work of love, by *laying down his life for us*, 1 Cor. xi. 23. And this is diligently to be observed, that we may make a right improvement of this ordinance, and receive the saving benefits of it. One reason why many do little esteem, and seldom or never partake of this ordinance, and do find little benefit by it, is, because they falsely imagine, that God in it only holds forth naked signs and resemblances of Christ and his salvation, which they account to be held forth so plainly in scripture, that they need not the help

help
stood
to th
semb
licie
all
nothe
never
bene
broug
drink
those
29. t
wholl
nance
to run
to it
their
table
receiv
accoun
they
on.
high
his er
that l
left t
dead
come
thank
But t
much
for th
fanati

help of such a sign; whereas, if they understood, that God *doth really give Christ himself to their faith*, by and with those signs and resemblances, they would prize it as the most delicious feast, and be desirous to partake of it on all opportunities, *Acts* ii. 42. and xx. 7. Another reason why many partake seldom or never of this ordinance, and know little of the benefit of it, is, because they think themselves brought by it into great danger of *eating and drinking their own damnation*, according to those terrifying words of the apostle, *1 Cor.* xi. 29. therefore they account it the safest way wholly to abstain from such a dangerous ordinance; or at least, that once a year is enough to run so great a hazard. And if they be brought to it sometimes by constraint of conscience, their slavish fears bereave them of all comfortable fruit of it. So that instead of striving to receive Christ and his salvation therein; they account themselves to have succeeded well, if they come off without the sentence of damnation. As the Jewish *Rabbies* write, that the high priest's life was so eminently hazarded by his entering once a year into the holy of holies, that he stayed there as little time as he could, lest the people should think him to be struck dead by the hand of God: And when he was come forth alive, he usually made a feast of thanksgiving for joy of so great a deliverance. But there is no reason why we should be so much terrified by those words of the apostle for they were darted against such a gross profanation of the Lord's Supper among the *Corinthians*

*in*thians as we may easily avoid, by observing the institution of it, which the apostle proposeth to them as a sufficient remedy against the gross abuse, in not discerning or discerning the *Lord's body* from other bodily food, and partaking of it as their own supper, with such disorder, that one was hungry, and another drunken. Besides, that terrifying word *damnation* may be rendered more mildly *judgment*, as it is in the margin; yea the apostle himself, *Ver* 32. doth interpret it of a merciful, *temporal judgment*, whereby we are *chastened* of the Lord, that we should not be *condemned* with the world. We are indeed prone to sin in receiving his ordinance unworthily, and so we are also to pollute, more or less, all other holy things that we meddle with. So that the consideration of our danger might fill us with a slavish fear in the use of all other means of grace as well as of this, were it not that we have a great high-priest, to bear this iniquity of our *holy things*, *Exod* xxviii. 38. under the covert of whose righteousness we are to draw near unto God, without slavish fear in the full assurance of faith, in this as well as in other holy ordinances; and we are to *rejoice in the Lord* in this spiritual feast, as the *Jews* were bound to do in their *solemn feasts*, *Leut* xvi. 14, 15. There are other abuses of this ordinance like to those of baptism forementioned, whereby it is rendered opposite, rather than subservient to the life of faith. Some put it in the place of Christ by trusting on it as a work of righteousness, for the procuring of God's favour,

your, or an ordinance sufficient to confer grace to the soul by the very work wrought. Others make it so necessary, that they account faith is not sufficient without it; and therefore they will partake of it, if they can possibly, though it be in a *disorderly manner upon their sick beds*, when they are in fear of death, as their *Viaticum*. The papists do horribly idolize it by their figment of transubstantiation, and the adoration of their breaden god, and their sacrifice of the mass for the sins of the quick and the dead. We ought warily to conceive, that the true body and blood of Christ are given to us, with the bread and wine, in a *spiritual mysterious manner*, by the unsearchable operation of the holy spirit, *uniting Christ and us together by faith*, without any transubstantiation in the outward elements.

6. Prayer is to be made use of as a means of living by faith in Christ, according to the new man. And it is the making our requests with supplication and thanksgiving: That it is to be used so, as an eminent means, appears, because God requireth it, 1 *Thess.* v. 17. *Rom.* xii. 12. It is our priestly work, 1 *Pet.* ii. 5. compared with *Psal.* cxli. 2. and the property of saints, 1 *Cor.* i. 2. and God is a God hearing prayer, *Psal.* lxxv. 2. God will be prayed to by his people, for the benefit that he is minded to bestow upon them, when once he hath enabled them to pray; though at first he is found of them that seek him not, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 27, 37. *Phil.* i. 19, 20. that he may prepare them for thanksgiving, and make *benefits*,
double

double benefits to them, *Psal.* lxvi. 16, 18, 19. and 1. 13. 2 *Cor.* i. 10, 11. Though his will be not changed by this means, yet it is accomplished ordinarily, and his purpose is to accomplish it this way. And therefore trusting assuredly should not make us neglect, but rather perform this duty, 2 *Sam.* vii. 27. Christ the mediator of the new covenant by which justification and sanctification are promised, is also the mediator for acceptance of our prayers, *Heb.* iv. 15, 16. The spirit that sanctifieth us, begetteth us in Christ, and sheweth the things of Christ to us, is a spirit of prayer, *Zech.* xii. 10. *Gal.* iv. 6. He is as fire inflaming the soul, and making it to mount upward in prayer to God. Prayerless people are dead to God. If they are children of *Zion*, yet they are but still born, dead *children that cry not*, *Acts* ix. 11. not written among the living in *Jerusalem*: Heathens in nature, though christians in name, *Fer.* x. 25. It is a duty so great, that it is put for all the service of God, as a fundamental duty, which if it be done, the rest will be done well, and not without it; and other ordinances of worship are helps to it, *Isa.* lvi. 7. It is the great means whereby faith doth exert it self to perform its whole work, and poureth it self forth in all holy desires and affections, *Psal.* lxii. 8. and so yields a sweet savour as *Mary's* box of precious spikenard, *Mark* xiv. 3. *John* xii. 3. And so the same promises are made to faith and prayer, *Rom.* x. 11, 12, 13. It is our continual incense and sacrifice, whereby we offer our selves, hearts, affections and lives to God,
Psal.

Psa
 act
 it a
 obtr
 3. L
 rich
 hol
 nab
 i. I
 the
 1 S
 bur
 xxx
 not
 of
 that
 18.
 nels
 tual
 bod
 his
 xxx
 is c
 on
 am
 gre
 acts
 11.
 eve
 thr
 Jan
 not
 31.
 our

Psal. cxli. 2. We act all grace in it, and must act it this way, or else we are not likely to act it any other way. And as we act grace, so we obtain grace by it, and all holiness, *Psal.* cxxxviii. 3. *Luke* xi. 13. *Heb.* iv. 16. *Psal.* lxxxi. 10. Our riches come in by it. *Israel* prevails while *Moses* holds up his hands, *Exod.* xvii. By prayer *Hannah* is strengthened against her sorrows, *1 Sam.* i. 15, 18. Peace is continued, *Phil.* iv. 6, 7. the disordered soul set in order by it as *Hannah*, *1 Sam.* i. *Psal.* xxxii. 1, 5. *Incense* was still burnt, while the lamps were dressed, *Exod.* xxx. 7, 8. It is added to the spiritual armory, not as a particular piece of it, but as a means of putting on all, and making use of all aright, that we may stand in the evil day, *Eph.* vi. 18. It is a means of transfiguring us into the likeness of *Christ* in holiness, and making our spiritual faces to shine, as *Christ* was transfigured bodily whilst he prayed, *Luke* ix. 29. and *Moses* his face shone whilst he talk'd with God, *Exod.* xxxiv. 29. Hence the frequent use of this duty is commended to us, *Eph.* vi. 18. *παντοτε και πανω* on all seasons and opportunities, and by the example of the saints in publick with the congregation, *Acts* ii. 42. and x. 30, 31. solemn acts of prayer should be continued daily, *Mat.* vi. 11. Yea, several times in a day, as morning and evening sacrifice, *Dan.* vi. 10. *Psal.* xcii. 2. or thrice, *Psal.* lv. 17. besides special occasions, *Jam.* v. 13. and brief ejaculations, that hinder not other business, *Psal.* cxxix. 8. *2 Sam.* xv. 31. *Neb.* ii. 4. Prayers should be solemn in our closets, *Mat.* vi. 6. in families, *Acts* x. 30,

31. And as sacrifices were multiplied on the sabbath-days, and days of atonement, and at other appointed seasons, Numb. xxviii. besides the continual burnt-offering, so ought prayer also. In a word, a christian ought to give up himself *eminently to this duty*, Psal. cix. 4. *without limits*, Psal. cxix. 164. But the great work is, to practise this duty rightly for holiness, only by faith in Christ. Here we had need say, *Lord teach us to pray*, Luke xi. 1. and that not only as to the matter, but as to the manner, both which are taught by Christ, in some measure, in that brief pattern of prayer which he taught his disciples. But for the understanding of it, we must consult the whole word, 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. And we have need of the spirit of Christ to guide us in the duty; and therefore we are taught to *pray by the spirit*, i. e. the *Holy Ghost*, Jude 20. Eph. ii. 18. the spirit of God only guideth and enableth our souls to pray aright; and that you may do so, take these Rules:

1. You must pray with your *hearts and spirits*, Isa. xxvi. 9. John iv. 24. where the spirit of Christ, and of prayer, *principally resides*, Gal. iv. 6. Eph. i. 17. with *Understanding*, 1 Cor. xiv. 15, 16. for *we are renewed in knowledge*, Col. iii. 10. 2 Pet. i. 3. so that praying in ignorance cannot sanctifie. And it must be with sincere hearty desire of the good things we ask in prayer: *For God seeth the heart*, Psal. lxii. 8. prayer is chiefly a *heart-work*, Psal. xxvii. 8. God heareth the heart without the mouth, but never heareth the mouth

mouth
13. Ye
of Go
utter
and d
in you
tering
so Go
must h
and th
xx. 12
ed, J
attent
or else
it, 1
your f
where
witho
say nev
attenti
finning
mumb
by tal
under
their f
have v
heart
things
exerci
deceit
denyin
pery h
and all
minds

mouth acceptably without the heart, 1 Sam. i. 13. Your prayer is odious hypocrisie, mocking of God, and taking his name in vain, when you utter petitions for the *coming of his kingdom*, and *doing of his will*, and yet hate godliness in your heart. This is lying to God, and flattering with your lips, but no true prayer; and so God takes it, *Psal.* lxxviii. 36. and you must have a sense of your wants and necessities, and that God only can supply them, 2 Chron. xx. 12. And *feruency* in those desires is required, *Jam.* v. 16. And you must pray, with *attention*, minding your selves what you pray, or else you cannot expect that God should mind it, 1 Pet. iv. 7. *Watch* to it, *Dan.* ix. 3. Set your selves to this duty intently. God seeth where your heart is wandring, when you *pray without attention*, *Ezek.* xxxiii. 31. When you say never so many prayers without understanding, attention, affection, it is not praying at all, but finning and playing the hypocrite; as papists mumble over their latin prayers upon the beads by tale, prating like parrots, what they cannot understand. And thus ignorant people say over their forms of *English* prayers, and account they have well discharged their duty, though their heart prayed not at all, and were minding other things. This is a mere lip labour and bodily exercise, offering a *dead carcass* to God, *plain deceit*, *Mal.* i. 13, 14. a *form of godliness*, with *denying the Power*, 2 Tim. iii. 5. whereby popery hath cheated the world of the power of this, and all other holy ordinances. They say God minds and knows what they speak, and approves it.

it. I answer, He sees them so as to judge them for hypocrites and profane persons, for not knowing, minding and approving what they utter themselves: He *hath no pleasure in fools*, Eccles. vii. 1, 4. They would not deal so with an earthly prince.

2. You must pray *in the name of Christ*. For *the spirit glorifies Christ*, John xvi. 14. and *leadeth us to God through Christ*, Eph. ii. 18. As I have shewed that walking in the spirit and walking in Christ, is all one; so praying in the spirit, and by and through Christ: And as we are to *walk* in the Name of the Lord, and to do *all things* in his Name, so to *pray* in his name as is commanded, John xiv. 13, 14. It is not enough to conclude our prayers, *through Jesus Christ our Lord*, but we must come for blessings in the garments of our elder brother, and must depend upon his worthiness and strength for all. So also we must praise God for *all things in his name*, as things received for his sake, and by him, Eph. v. 20. We must lay hold on his strength only, and plead nothing, and own nothing for our Acceptance but him. We must not plead our own works arrogantly, like the proud *Pharisee*, Luke xviii. 11, 12. except only as fruits of grace and rewards of grace, Isa. xxxviii. 3. Praying in the spirit is upon gospel, not legal principles, Rom. vii. 6. with 2 Cor. vi. 3. with great humiliation, and sense of unworthiness, Psal. li. with a broken spirit, with despair of acceptance, otherwise than upon Christ's account, Dan. ix. 18. If your enlargements, strugglings, meltings
have

have been never so great, yet without this, all is abominable.

3. Hence you must not think *to be accepted for the goodness of your prayers, and trust on them as works of righteousness*; which is making idols of your prayers, and putting them into the place of Christ, quite contrary to praying in the name of Christ. Thus *Papists* hope to be saved by saying their tale of prayers upon their bead rows; and they have indulgences granted upon their saying so many prayers, and of such a sort. Yea, some ignorant protestants, trust on their prayers as duties of righteousness; and they think one prayer to be more acceptable than another, by reason of the holiness of the form, if it were made by holy men; especially the Lord's prayer, which they use to help them in any exigence or danger; how little soever they can apply it to their own case, they make an idol of it. And some use it and other places of scripture, as a spell or charm, to drive away the Devil: And others think their prayers more acceptable in one place than in another, by reason of the holiness of the place, *John iv. 21, 24. 1 Tim. ii. 8.* Others trust on their *much speaking*, *Mat. vi.* Which they call the enlarging of their hearts. They think to put off God, and stop the mouth of conscience with a few prayers, and so to live as they list.

4. Pray to God as your Father, through Christ as your Saviour, in faith of Remission of sins, and your acceptance with God, and the obtaining all other things which you desire of him, as far as is necessary for your salvation, *Jam. i.*

5, 6, 7. *Chap. v. 15. 1 John v. 14, 15. Mark xi. 24. Heb. x. 14. and Psal. lxxii. 8. and lxxxvi. 7 and lv. 16. and lvi. 1, 2. and xvii. 6.* This is praying in Christ, *Eph. iii. 12.* and by the Holy Ghost, the spirit of adoption, *Rom. viii. 16. Gal. iv. 6.* Without this, Prayer is lifeless and heartless, and but a dead carcass, *Rom. x. 14. Psal. lxxvii. 4.* By this you may judge whether you have prayed rightly, more than by your melting affection, or largeness in expression. Though you be not assured that you shall have every thing that you ask, yet every thing that is good. This faith you must endeavour to act; and therefore if any sin by conscience, you must strive first to get the pardon of it, *Psal. xxxii. 1;* and li. 14, 15 and purification of it by faith, that you may *lift up holy hands without wrath and doubting,* 1 Tim. ii. 8. The *sin of wrath* there is especially mentioned because that is *contrary to love and forgiving others*. Here lies the strength, life and powerfulness of prayer: Set faith on work, and you will be powerful and prevail.

5 You must strive in prayer to *stir up, and act every other sanctifying grace, through faith moving you thereunto*. Thus their spikenards will yield their smell, as *godly sorrow*, *Psal. xxxvii. 18. Peace*, *Isa. xxvii. 8. Joy*, *Psal. cv. 3. Hope*, *Psal. lxxi. 5. Desire and love to God*, *Psal. iv. 6. and love to all his commandments*, *Psal. cxix. 4, 5. and to his people out of love to him*, *Psal. cxxii.* You must seek the spirit himself in the first place, *Luke xi. 13. Psal. xxxvii. 5. and all spiritual things*, *Matth. vi. 33.* Praying only for carnal things

things, shews a carnal heart, and leaves it carnal. Pray for faith, *Mat. ix. 24.* and for such things as may serve most for the glorifying God, *2 Chron. i. 11, 12.* and for outward things, you must act faith in submission to his will; and thus prayer sets you in a holy frame, *Matth. xxvi. 42. Luke xxii. 42, 43.* Hallowing God's name must be your aim, *Matth. vi.* not your lusts, *James iv. 3.*

6. Strive to bring your soul into order by this duty, however disordered by guilt, anguish, inordinate cares or fears, *Psal. xxxii. 1, 5.* and *lv. 16, 17, 20, 22.* and *lxix. 32. Phil. iv. 6, 7. 1 Sam. i.* A watch must be often wound up; you must wrestle in prayer against your unbelief, doubting, fears, cares, reluctancy of the flesh to that which is good; against all evil lusts and desires; coldness of affection, impatience, trouble of spirit, every thing that's contrary to an holy life, and the graces and holy desires to be acted for your selves or others, *Col. iv. 12. Rom. xv. 30.* Stir up your selves to the duty, *Col. ii. 1, 2. Isa. lxiv. 7.* Though the flesh be cross and reluctant, we must not yield, but resist by the Spirit, *Mat. xxvi. 41.* And thus we shall find the Spirit helping our infirmities, *Rom. viii. 26, 27.* Though God seem to defer long, we must not faint or be discouraged, *Luke xviii. 1, 7.* The greater our Agonies be the more earnestly we are to pray, *Psal. xxii. 1, 2. Luke xxii. 42.* This is *προσάφισμα τῷ προσευχῇ*, *Rom. xii. 12. Eph. vi. 18.* Thus you will find prayer a great heart-work, and not such a thing as may be done while you think on other things, and that it requireth all the strength of faith and affection that you can pos-

sibly stir up: Thus you may get a holy frame.

7. You must make a good use of the *whole matter*, and all the *manner* of prayer, as ordinary and extraordinary exigencies may require, to *stir up grace in you, by wrestling, and to bring your hearts into a holy frame*. As in *Confession*, you must condemn your self according to the flesh, but not as you are in Christ. You must not deny that Grace that you have, as if you were only wicked hitherto, and now to begin again, which hinders praise for grace received in those that are already converted. In *Supplication* you must endeavour to work up your heart to a godly sorrow, *Psal. xxxviii. 18.* and a holy sense of your own sin and misery, and lay before you the aggravations thereof, *Psal. li. 3. Psal. cii.* *Complaint* and *Lamentation* are one great part of prayer, as the lamentations of *Jeremiah*. And you must add *pleading* to your petitions, with such arguments as may serve to strengthen faith, and to stir up and kindle affection, *Job xxiii. 4.* which pleadings are taken from *Attributes*, *Num. xiv. 17, 18.* *Promises*, *2 Sam. vii. 27, 28, &c. Gen. xxxii. 9, 12.* the *equity* of our cause, *Psal. xvii. 2, 3.* the advantage and benefit of the thing to the *glory of God* and our *Comfort*, *Psal. cxv. 1, 2. Psal. lxxix. 9, 10, 13.* Naked petitions are not sufficient, when the soul findeth special cause of *struggling* and *wrestling* against corruptions and dangers, and for mercies. Christ's large prayer is made up, *John xvii.* of *pleading*, and very few petitions. And we must make use also of *Praise* and *Thanksgiving*, to stir up peace, joy,

joy, love, &c. Gen. xxxiii. 10. Psal. xviii. 1, 2, 3. and xxxiii. 1. and lxxiv. 14. and civ. 34. Especially be much in praising God for mercies of the *newstate in Christ*, Eph. i. 3. and then you will the better give thanks for all benefits on his account, Eph. v. 20. 1 Thess. v. 18. and plead those benefits to stir up to faith and duty. That brief ejaculation, *Lord have mercy on me*, is very good to be used; but it will not answer the end and use of the whole duty of Prayer, as some lazy carnal people would have it, and so harden themselves in the neglect of the duty. Though the large improvement and use of all the matter of Prayer at all times, is not required, but only, as ordinary or extraordinary occasions may require.

8. You must not confine and limit your prayers by any prescribed form, seeing it is impossible that any such forms should be contrived, as should answer and fit all the various conditions and necessities of the soul at all times: I do not condemn all forms, as that made by Christ, the Lord's prayer; though it were easie to shew, that Christ never intended it for a form of prayer, so as to bind any to the precise form of words; and it is plain the spirit of God hath expressed it in different words, Mat. vi. Luke xi. But better to pray by that form or other forms than not at all. It is uncharitable to take away crutches, or wooden legs from lame people, yet none will look upon them *but as dead helps*. I say it is *utterly unlawful to bind our selves to any form*, because none can answer the duty fitly, and suitably to particular occasions Eph. vi. 18.

Phil. iv. 6. *John* xv. 7. 1 *Thess.* v. 18. *Eph.* v. 20. You must make the whole Scripture your *Common-Prayer-Book*, as the primitive church did, being the language of the spirit reaching all occasions and conditions, and fittest to speak to God in. And if you use a form, you must follow it by the spirit, farther than the form goes, according as he shall guide you by the word, or else you *quench the spirit*, 1 *Thess.* v. 19. If you know the principles of prayer, and have a lively sense of your necessities, and hearty desires of God's grace and mercies, you will be able to pray without forms, and your affections will bring forth words out of the fulness of your heart. And you need not be ever-solicitous and timorous about words; for doubtless, the spirit who is the help to us in speaking to men, will also much more help us to speak to God, if we desire it, 1 *Cor.* i. 5. *Mar.* xiii. 11. *Luke* xii. 12. And God regards not eloquent words, nor artificial composition, neither need we regard it in private prayer, *Isa.* xxxviii. 14. If you limit your self to forms, you will thereby grow formal, and limit the spirit.

7. Another means appointed of God is *singing of Psalms*, i. e. songs of any sacred subject composed to a tune, hymns or songs of praise, and spiritual songs, of any sublime spiritual matter, as *Psal.* xlv. the song of Solomon. God hath commanded it in the New Testament, *Col.* iii. 16. *Eph.* v. 19. Though now in these days, many question whether it be an ordinance or no; and there were many commands for it under the Old Testament, *Psal.* cxlix. 2, 3. and

xcvi. and c. *Moses* and the children of *Israel* sang before *David's* time, *Exod.* xv. *David* composed *Psalms* by the spirit to be sung publicly, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 1. 2. yea, privately too, *Psal.* xl. 3. 2 *Chron.* xxix. 30. *Psal.* cv. 2. Other songs also were made upon several occasions and used, whether they were parts of the scriptures or no; as *Solomon* made a thousand and five, 1 *Kings* iv. 32. And they made songs upon occasion. Which teacheth that 'tis lawful for us to do so, if they be according to the word, *Isa.* xxxviii. 9, 14. The matter of scripture may be sung, *Psal.* cxix. 54. Christ and his disciples sang a hymn, *Matth.* xxvi. 30. supposed to be one of *David's* *Psalms*; and they were written for our instruction, as well as other parts of scripture, *Rom.* xv. and so to be used now in singing. They speak of the things of the New Testament, either figuratively or clearly; and we may understand them better now, than the *Jews* could under the Old Testament, 2 *Cor.* iii. 16. *Col.* ii. 17. *Christians* heretofore practised this duty as well as *Jews*, *Acts* xvi. 25. Hence their *Antilucani Hymn* were noted by *Pliny* a heathen. These songs or hymns may be used at all times, especially for holy mirth or rejoicing, *James* v. 13. But this text is not to be taken exclusively in singing, any more than in Prayer, *Psal.* xxxviii. 18 2 *Chron.* xxxv. 25.

But the right manner of this duty is chiefly to be noted. And here (1) Trust not upon the melody of the voice, as if that pleased God, who delighteth only in the melody of the

Heart, Col. iii. 16. Neither let the recreating your *Senses* be your end, which is but a carnal work, *Non musica chordula sed cor*. This spiritual musick was typified by musical instruments of old. (2) You must use it for the same end as mediation and prayer, according to the nature of what is sung; i. e. to quicken faith, 2 Chron. xx. 21, 22. Acts xvi. 25, 26. and joy and delight in the Lord, glorying in him, Psal. civ. 33, 34. and cv 3. cxlix. 1, 2. and xxxiii. 1, 2, 3. You are never right until you can be heartily merry in the Lord, to act joy and mirth holily, James v. 13. Eph. v. 19. and also to get more knowledge and instruction in heavenly mysteries, and in your duty, teaching and admonishing, Col. iii. 16. Many Psalms are *Maschills* (as their title is) i. e. Psalms of instruction; thus we are to sing such Psalms as speak in the first person, though we cannot apply them to our selves as words uttered by our selves concerning our selves: And in this we do not lye. David speaks of Christ as of himself, as a pattern of affliction and vertue to instruct others; and we sing such psalms not as our words, but words for our instruction; and therein we do not lye any more, than the *Levites*, the sons of *Corah*, or *Jeduthum*, or other Musicians bound to sing them, Psal v. and xxxix. and xlii. Though it be good to personate all good that we can, yet we have so much liberty in the use of psalms, that though we cannot apply all to our selves, as speaking and thinking the same, yet we shall answer the end, if we sing for our instruction, as in Psal. vi. and xxvi. and xlvi. and ci. and cxxxi.

And

And
and
metro
ry. S
varie
in th
some
xxxiv
and c
instru
dose f
to fit
er'd p
xvi. r
others
barou
8. J
used f
mende
ix. 15
have e
23. U
quent
upon o
vii. 6
Sam.
Joel i
of attor
was to
prophe
Testam
extraor
ness by
ordinar

And Psalms have a peculiar fitness for teaching and instructing, because the pleasantness of metre said or sung, is very helpful to the memory. See *Deut.* xxxi. 19, 21. And there is a variety of curious artifice in the placing of words in the Psalms upon this account; and there are some alphabetical psalms, as *Psal.* xxv. and xxxiv. and xxxvii. and cxi. and cxii. and cxix, and cxlv. And by the melody of the sound, the instruction comes in with delight, as a physical dose sugar'd; and sorrow is naturally allay'd, to fit the mind with spiritual joy, and distemper'd passions appeased, 2 *Kings* iii. 15. 1. *Sam.* xvi. 14, 15. 16. So that *Orpheus*, *Amphion* and others, were famous for civilizing rude and barbarous people by musick.

8. *Fasting* is also an ordinance of God to be used for the same purpose and end, and is commended to us under the New Testament, *Mat.* ix. 15. and xvii. 21. 1 *Cor.* vii. 5. And we have examples of it, *Acts* xiii. 2, 3. and xiv. 23. Under the Old Testament, there were frequent commands for it, and examples, chiefly upon occasion of extraordinary afflictions, 1 *Sam.* vii. 6. *Neb.* ix. 1. *Dan.* ix. 3. and x. 2, 3. 2 *Sam.* xii. 16. *Psal.* xxxv. 13. 2 *Sam.* iii. 31. *Joel* ii. 13. beside the anniversary great day of attonement, *Lev.* xvi. 29, 31. when every one was to fast on pain of cutting off. There is a prophecy of the same for the times of the New Testament, *Zech.* xii. 12. It was used most on extraordinary occasions, and it is a help to holiness by faith, because it is a meet help for extraordinary prayer and humiliation, *Joel* i. 14. and

ii. 12. But the great matter is, to use it *rightly* as followeth.

(1.) *Trust not in it as meriting or satisfying, as Papists and Pharisees do, Luke xviii. 11.* putting it in the place of *Christ*; or as a means of *its self* conferring grace, and mortifying lusts, as many do, who may sooner kill their bodies than their lusts; or as any purifying *Rite*; yea, or in or for *it self*, acceptable to God, *1 Tim. iv. 8. Heb. xii. 9. Col. ii. 16, 17, 20, 23.* Imagine not that prayer is not acceptable without it, for this is against faith. Fasts as well as feasts are no *substantial* parts of worship, because not spiritual, but bodily. Though under the Old Testament they were parts as instituted rites, figurative and teaching; but that use is now ceased; as that on the day of atonement, and so many significative rites adjoined to fasting, as sackcloth, ashes, rending garments, pouring out water, lying on the earth; the kingdom of God consists not in these things, *Rom. xiv. the soul is hardened by trusting in them, Isa. lviii. 3, 6. Zech. vii. 5, 10.*

(2.) *Use it as a help to extraordinary prayer and humiliation*; that the mind may not be unsuited for it, by eating, drinking, or bodily pleasures, *Joel ii. 13. Isa. xxii. 2, 13. Zech. xii. 10, 14.* It is good only as a help to the soul, removing impediments. The best fast is, when the mind is taken off from delights, as in *John the Baptist's* case, *Mat. iii. 4.* when heaven and godly sorrow take off the soul, *Zech. xii. 10, 14.*

(3.)

(3.) Use it in such a measure as may be proper for its end, without which it is worth nothing. If abstinence divert your mind, by reason of a gnawing appetite, then you had better eat sparingly, as *Daniel* in his great fast, *cb. xii. 2, 3*. Some have not enough of spiritual mindedness to give up themselves to fasting and prayer, without greater distraction; and such had better eat, than go beyond their strength in a thing not absolutely necessary, which produceth only a slavish act, as in the case of virginity, *1 Cor. vii. 7, 8. ix. 34, 35, 36*. Christ would not have his weak disciples necessitated to the duty, *Matth. ix. 14, 15*. In the mean time, such should strive to be sensible of the weakness and carnality that hinders their use of this excellent help.

9. You may expect here something to be spoken of *vows*, but I shall only say this of them, think not to bring your selves to good by vows and promises, as if the strength of your own law could do it, when the strength of God's law doth it not. We bring children to make promises of amendment, but we know how well they keep them. The Devil will urge to vow, and then to break, that he may perplex your conscience the more.

10. Another great mean is *fellowship and communion with the saints*, *Act ii. 42*.

1st, This mean must be used *diligently*. Whosoever God saveth should be added to some visible church, and come into communion of other saints; and if they have not opportunity for it, their heart should be bent towards it. Sometimes

times the church is in the wilderness, and hindered from visible communion and ordinances: But they that believe in Christ are always willing and desirous so to add and join themselves, *Acts* ii. 41, 44, 47. and they continued *steadfastly in fellowship*, *1 John* ii. 19. And God binds his people to leave the fellowship and society of the wicked as much as may be, *2 Cor.* vi. 17. And so far as we are necessitated to accompany with them, we ought to shew *charity* to their souls and bodies, *1 Cor.* v. 9. This communion with saints is to be exercised in *private converse*, *Psal.* ci. 4, 5, 6, 7. and in *publick assemblies*, *Heb.* x. 25. *Zech.* xiv. 16, 17. And doubtless it ought to be used for the attainment of *holiness*; as may be proved.

First, in general: Because God communicates all salvation to a people ordinarily by, or in a church: Either by taking them into fellowship, or holding forth the light of truth by his churches to the world. A church is the temple of God, where God dwells, *1 Tim.* iii. 15. He hath placed his name and salvation there, as in *Jerusalem* of old, *Joel* ii. 32. *2 Chron.* vi. 5, 6. He hath given to his churches those officers and ordinances whereby he converts others, *1 Cor.* xii. 28. His springs are there, *Psal.* lxxxvii. He makes the several members of a church, instruments for the conveyance of his grace and fulness from one to another, as the members of the natural body convey to each other the fulness of the head, *Eph.* iv. 16. All the *New-born* are brought forth and nourished by the church, *Isa.* lxvi. 8, 11. *ch.* xlix. 20. and lx. 4. And therefore all

all that
They s
10 stand
thren
And w
not me
They ca
have n
This m
God to
Zech. v
Secom
the sain
1. By
received
As (
42. Isa.
the min
over for
Isa. xxv.
without
and if be
themsel
each ot
good, nor
neither
this day
very nar
(2.) M
cible wh
20. 2 Co
(3.) M
lation, t
to fall, a

all that would be saved should join to a church :
*They shall prosper that love the church, so as
 to stand in its gates, and unite as members, bre-
 thren and companions, Psal. cxxii. 2, 4, 6.*
 And wrath is denounced against those that are
 not members of it, at least of the mystical body;
*They cannot have God for their father, that
 have not that for their mother, Cant. i. 7, 8.*
 This maketh those that desire fellowship with
 God, to take hold of the skirts of his people,
Zech. viii. 23.

Secondly, In particular : Fellowship with
 the saints conduceth to holiness many ways.

1. By manifold helps to holiness which are
 received thereby.

As (1.) The word and sacraments, Acts ii.
 42. Isa. ii. 3. Matth. xxviii. 19, 20. And all
 the ministerial office and labour in watching
 over souls, Heb. xiii. 17. 1 Thess. v. 12, 13.
 Isa. xxv. 6. None of these helps can be enjoyed
 without fellowship of saints, each with other ;
 and if believers had been to have stood single by
 themselves, and not maintained fellowship with
 each other, for mutual assistance and common
 good, none of these things could have continued,
 neither could any believer have been extant at
 this day, in an ordinary way, but even the
 very name of believers had been abolished.

(2.) Mutual prayer, which is the more for-
 cible when all pray together, Mat. xviii. 19,
 20. 2 Cor. i. 10, 11. Jam. v. 16. Rom. xv. 30.

(3.) Mutual admonition, instruction, conso-
 lation, to help each other when they are ready
 to fall, and to promote the good work in each
 other,

other, *1 Thess. v. 14. He that walketh with the wise shall be wise, Prov. xiii. 20. W to him that is alone when he falleth. See Eccl. iv. 9, 12.* In church fellowship there are many helpers, many to watch: Soldiers have their security in company, and the church is compared to an army with banners, *Cant. vi. 4, 10.* So for quickning affections, *iron sharpeneth iron, Prov. xxvii. 17. Likewise the counsel of a friend, like ointment and perfume, rejoiceth the heart, Prov. xxvii. 9.* Yea the wounds and reproofs of the righteous are as precious balm, *Psal. cxli. 5.*

(4.) *External supports* which mitigate afflictions, and are to be communicated mutually, *Eph. iv. 28. 1 Pet. iv. 9, 10.* The affliction is increased, when none careth for our souls, *Psal. cxlii. 4.*

(5.) *Excommunication* when offences are exceeding hainous, or men obstinate in sin. This ordinance is appointed for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved, *1 Cor. v. 5.* Better and more hopeful it is, to be cast out by the church for a persons amendment, than to be wholly without the church at all times; and better to be a lost sheep, than a goat or swine. For excommunication cuts off actual communion only, until repentance be evident, and not absolutely abolisheth the title and relation of a brother and church-member, though it judgeth one to be an unnatural brother, and a pernicious rotten member at present, not fit for acts of communion. Besides admonition is still to be afforded, *2 Thess. iii. 15,* and any means are to be

be u
the
a pe
ship
not w
as to
the
(6.
our ey
coura
10, 1
2. 1
do ap
on: A
Holy,
prayer
sider
ther Z
form t
(1.)
ing, co
cannot
those w
Others
foot; a
from go
v. 10, 1
is most
tified w
to the ac
2. In
with Ch
Christ in

be used that may serve to cure and restore him; the church reacheth forth a hand to help such a person, though it do not join hands in fellowship with him; or it communicateth to him, not with him. Yet if he have not so much grace as to repent, it were better he had never known the way of righteousness, 2 Pet. ii. 21.

(6.) The lively examples of saints are before our eyes in church-fellowship, to teach and encourage, *Phil.* iii. 17. *cb.* iv. 9. 2 *Tim.* iii. 10, 11. 2 *Cor.* ix. 2.

2. By those holy duties that are required and do appertain to this fellowship and communion: All acts that belong to this fellowship are Holy, as *hearing*, receiving the *sacraments*, *prayer*, mutual *admonitions*, &c. I shall consider some such holy acts, whereby we are rather *Doers* than *Receivers*, and which we perform towards others.

(1.) *As, Godly Discourse*, teaching, admonishing, comforting others in Christ: Which we cannot so perform towards others, as towards those we have strict fellowship with in Christ. Others like swine, trample these jewels under foot; and saints therefore are forced to refrain from godly discourse in their company, *Amos* v. 10, 13, 16. and vi. 10. But holy discourse is most acceptable to the saints, and to be practised with them, *Mal.* iii. 16. and is greatly to the advantage of holiness, *Prov.* xi. 25.

2. In *helping*, *succouring*, and *conversing* with Christ in his members; we do good to Christ in his members in church fellowship; and

and we our selves as members of Christ, act as well *from* Christ as *towards* Christ; whereas if we do good to others *without*, we do good only for Christ's sake, but not *to* Christ, *Mat.* xxv. 35, 49. *Psal.* xvi. 2, 3. We have advantage in general, to do all duties that belong to us as members of Christ to fellow members, which we cannot do if separate from them; as a natural member cannot perform its office to other members if separate from them.

2dly. The means must be used *rightly* for the attaining to holiness *only in Christ*.

1. One Rule is, *Do not trust in church-membership*, or on churches, as if this or that relation in fellowship, commended you to God of it self; whereas, a church-way is but a help to fellowship with Christ, and walking in the duties of that fellowship. The *Israelites* stumbled at Christ by trusting on their carnal privileges, and set them in opposition to Christ; whereas they should have only made them subservient to Christ: Confidence in them should have been abandoned, as *Paul's* example teacheth, *Phil.* iii. 3, 4, 5, &c. We must not glory in *Paul*, *Apollos*, *Cephas*, but in Christ, else we glory in the flesh, and in men, *1 Cor.* i. 12, 13. and iii. 21. Trusting on church-privileges, is an inlet to formality and licentiousness, *Jer.* vii. 4, 8, 9, 10. and thence the corruption of churches, *Isa.* i. 10. 2 *Tim.* ii. 20.

2. Follow no church *any further than you may follow it in the way of Christ*; and keep fellowship with it only upon the account of Christ, because it follows Christ, and hath fellowship

lowship with Christ, 1 *John* i. 3. *Zech.* viii. 23. If a church revolt from Christ, we must not follow it, how ancient soever it be, as the *Israelitish* church was not to be followed when it persecuted Christ and his apostles; and many by adhering to that church fell from Christ, *Phil.* iii. 6. *Acts* vi. 13, 14. and xxii. 28. We are indeed to hear the church, but not every one that calls it self so, and none, any farther than it speaketh as a true church, according to the voice of the shepherd, *John* x. 27. We must subject our selves to ministers of Christ, and stewards of his mysteries, 1 *Cor.* iv. 1. But must give up our selves first to Christ absolutely, and to the church according to the will of Christ, 2 *Cor.* viii. 5. Our fear must not be taught by the precepts of men, *Mat.* xv. The doctrines of any men are to be tryed by scripture, whatever authority they pretend to, *Acts.* xvii. 11. An unlimited following church guides brought the church into *Babylon*, and into all manner of spiritual whoredoms and abominations. You are not baptised into the name of the church, but into the name of Christ, 1 *Cor.* i. 13.

3. Do not think that you must attain this or that Degree of grace, before you join your self in full communion with a church of Christ in all ordinances; But when you have given up your self to Christ and learn'd the duty of communion, give up your self unto a church of Christ, though you find much weakness and inability. For church ordinances of special communion, serve to strengthen you, and how can you get heat

heat being alone? The disciples as soon as converted, embraced all fellowship, *Act. ii. 42.* And churches that they may forward holiness in themselves and others, must be willing to receive Christ's weak ones, and to feed his lambs as well as better grown sheep, and *bear them on their sides*, *Isa. lxi. 12.* how else shall Christ's weak ones grow strong by that nourishment that other parts supply? They are very unreasonable that expect christians should grow, out of church fellowship, to as high a degree of grace, as those that are in those pastures of tender grass; and are unwilling to receive any that they are like to have occasion to be bear with; whereas *bearing* and *long suffering*, are great duties of church-fellowship, *Eph. iv. 2, 3. Rom. xiv. 1.* The weakest have most need to be strengthened by church-communion; and we are bound to receive them as Christ hath received us, *Rom. xv. 7.* We do not reject or separate the weaker parts of the body, *1 Cor. xii. 23, 24.* but put more honour and comeliness on them. Admission into the churches in the apostolick times was gained upon profession, with a shew of seriousness, though tares got in among the wheat, and many scandals arose to the reproach of the ways of Christ, and the greatest strictness will not keep out all hypocrites; yet the best care must be taken so far as not to hinder any that have the least truth of grace.

4. Keep communion with a church, *for the sake of communion with Christ*, *1 John i. 3. Zech. viii. 23.* Therefore you must keep communion in Christ's pure ways only, and in them

seek

seek
those
godli
at sp
Chur
ritua
cordi
v. 16
other
that
thy
ough
the
comm
provi
comm
comm
ways
And
churc
ship
are
anoth
And
godly
have
One
one
lived
10. T
societ
lived
lated
nothe

seek Christ by faith, that in the enjoyment of those advantages, you may receive, and act the godliness and holiness forementioned, and aim at spiritual flourishing and growth in grace: Chuse therefore fellowship with the most spiritual churches; judge of churches and men, according to the rule of the *new creature*, 2 *Cor.* v. 16, 17. and try them, *Rev.* ii. 2. and iii. 9. otherwise a church may corrupt you. See that thy communion answer its *End*, tend to thy *Edification*, not to destruction; which you ought to take all the advantages of, not only in the church where you are a member, but by communion with other churches, as occasionally providence casts you among them. For your communion with a particular church, obligeth to communion with all the churches of Christ in his ways, as you are called thereto, 1 *Cor.* x. 17. And it's an abuse to say we are members of a church in *London*, and therefore refuse fellowship with a church in the country; seeing if we are members of Christ, we are members of one another, whether single persons or churches. And endeavour to join in fellowship with the godly of the place where you live, that you may have the more frequent and constant communion. *Onesimus*, though converted at *Rome*, must be one of the church of the *Colossians*, because he lived there, *Col.* iv. 9. compared with *Philemon*, 10. The union of the saints together in distinct societies, according to the places where they lived, was the apostolick practice, and can't be violated without sin. Such can best watch over one another, admonish, comfort and edify each other,

which is the benefit of communion; and they indeed destroy communion, that seek a communion where they can't have this benefit. I only add to this head, that church-fellowship without practising the ways of Christ, is but a conspiracy to take his name in vain, and a counterfeit church-fellowship of hypocrites; it is impudence for such to invite others to their communion, tyranny to compel them. Every christian is bound to seek a better church fellowship by reformation; and those that do so, are the best sons of Christ's church, who enquire, Is this the way to enjoy Christ, a church-way being appointed to enjoy Christ therein.

5. *Especially leave not the church in persecution*, when you need its help most, and are then most tryed whether you will cleave to it: This is a sign of apostacy, *Heb. x. 25, 26. Mat. xxiv. 9, 10, 12, 13.* We should cleave to one another as one flesh, even to prisons and death; or else we deny Christ in his members, *Mat. xxv. 43.*

D I R E C T I O N X I V .

That you may seek Holiness and Righteousness, only by believing in Christ, and walking in him by Faith according to the former Directions, take Encouragement from the great Advantages of this way, and excellent Properties of it.

E X P L I C A T I O N .

THIS direction may serve as an *Epilogue* or conclusion, by stirring us up unto a lively and

and chearful imbracing those gospel rules fore-mentioned by several weighty *Motives*. Many are kept from seeking godliness because they know not the way to it : Or the way that they think of, seems uncouth, unpleasant, disadvantageous and full of discouragement ; like the way through the wilderness to *Canaan*, which wearied the *Israelites*, and occasioned their many *murmurings*, Num. xxi. 4.

But this is a way so good and excellent, that those that have the true knowledge of it, and desire heartily to be godly, can't dislike it. I shall shew the Excellency of it in several particulars : But you should first call to mind what is the way I have taught *viz. union and fellowship with Christ*, and by faith in Christ, as discovered in the gospel ; not by the law, or in a natural condition, or by thinking to get it before we come to Christ, to procure Christ by it, which is striving against the stream : But that we must first apply Christ and his salvation to our selves for our comfort, and that by confident faith, and then walk by that faith according to the new man in Christ, and not as in a natural condition, and use all means of holiness rightly for this end. Now that this is an excellent advantageous way, appears by the following desirable *Properties* of it.

1st. It hath this *Property*, that it tends to the *Abasement of all flesh and exaltation of God only, in his grace and power through Christ* ; And so it is agreeable to God's design in all his works, and the end that he aimeth at, *Rom. xi. 6. Isa. ii. 17. Ezek. xxxvi. 21, 22, 31. 32. Psal. cxlv. 4.* and a fit means for the at-

taining the end that we ought to aim at in the first place, which is the hallowing, sanctifying and glorifying God's name in all things; and is the first and chief petition, *Mat. vi.* and is the end of all our actings, *1 Cor. x. 31.* was the end of giving the law, *Rom. iii. 19, 20.* God made all things for Christ, and would have him have the pre-eminence in all, *Col. i. 17, 18.* That the father may be glorified in the son, *John xiv. 13.* And this property of it is a great argument to prove that it is the way of God, and hath the character of his image stamped upon it; we may say that it is *like him*; and a way according to his heart, as Christ proveth his doctrine to be of God by this argument, *John vii. 18.* And Paul proveth the doctrine of justification, and of sanctification, and salvation by grace through faith, to be of God; because it excludes all boastings of the creatures, *Rom. iii. 27, 28. 1 Cor. i. 29, 30, 31. Eph. iii. 8, 9.* This property appears evidently in the mystery of sanctification by Christ in us through faith.

For 1. It sheweth that we *can* do nothing by our *natural will*, or any *power of the flesh*; and that God *will* not enable us to do any thing *that way*, *Rom. vii. 18.* however nature be stirred up by the law or natural helps, *Gal. iii. 21.* And so it serveth to work self-loathing and abasement, and to make us look upon nature as desperately wicked and past cure, and not to be reformed, but put off, by putting on Christ: It remains wicked, and only wicked, after we have put on Christ.

2. It

2. It sheweth that all our good works and living to God, *are not by our own power* and strength at all; but by the power of *Christ*, living in us by faith, and that God enableth us to act, not merely according to our natural power, as he enableth carnal men and all other creatures, but above our own power, by *Christ* united to us and in us through the spirit: All men *live, move, and their being in him*, and by his universal support and maintenance of nature in its being and activity, they act, *Heb. i. 3.* So that the glory of their acting as *creatures* belongs to God: But God acts more immediately in *his people*, who are *one flesh and spirit with Christ*, and act not by their own power, but by the power of the spirit of *Christ* in them, as closely united to him, and being the living temples of his spirit; so that *Christ* is the immediate principal agent of all their good works, and they are *Christ's* works properly, who works all our works in us and for us, and yet they are the saints works by fellowship with *Christ*, by whose light and power the faculties of the saints do act and are acted, *Gal. ii. 20. Eph. iii. 16, 17. Col. i. 1.* so we are to ascribe all our works to God in *Christ*, and thank him for them as free Gifts, *1 Cor. xv. 10. Phil. i. 11.* God enableth us to act not by our selves, as he doth others, but by himself. The wicked are supported in acting only according to their own nature; so they act wickedly: Thus all are said to live, move, and have their being in God, *Act. xvii. 27.* But God enableth us to conquer sin, not by our selves, but by himself, *Hos. i. 7.* and the glory

of enabling us, doth not only belong to him, which the pharisee could not but ascribe to him, *Luke xviii. 11.* but also the glory of doing all in us; and yet we work as one with Christ, even as he works as one with the Father, by the Father working in him: We live as branches by the juice of the vine, act as members by the animal spirits of the head, and bring forth fruit by marriage to him as our Husband, and work in the strength of him as the living bread that we feed on, he is all in the new man, *Col. iii. 11.* and all the promises are made good in him, *2 Cor. i. 20.*

2dly, It hath this *property* that it *consisteth well with other doctrines of the gospel*; which contrary errors do not. And hence this is the way to confirm us in many other points of the gospel, and therefore appears to be true by its harmony with other truths, and fit linking with them in the same golden chain of the mystery of godliness, and evidenceth them to be true by their harmony with it. I have shewed that mens mistaking the true way of sanctification is the cause of perverting the scripture in other points of faith, and of declining from the truth to *Popish, Socinian, and Arminian* tenets: Because men cannot seriously take that for truth, which they judge not to be according to godliness. But this way of holiness will evidence that these gospel doctrines which they refuse, are according to godliness; and that those tenets which a blind zeal for holiness moveth them to embrace, are indeed contrary to holiness; however satan appeareth to their natural understandings as an
angel

angel of light in such tenets: Whatever men say, 'tis certain that *Legalists* are indeed the *Antinomians*. I shall instance in some truths confirmed by it.

1. The doctrine of *original sin*, viz. Not only the guilt of *Adam's* sin, and a corrupt nature, but utter impotency to do spiritual good, and proneness to sin, which is death to God in all people according to nature, *Psal.* li. 5. *Rom.* v. 12. There is an utter inability to keep the law truly in any point. Many deny this doctrine because they think that if people believe this, they will excuse their sins by it, and be apt to despair of all striving to do good works, and leave off all endeavours, and grow licentious; and they think it will be more conducing to godliness, to hold and teach, either that there is no original sin or corruption derived from *Adam*, or at least it is done away, either in the world, by universal redemption; or in the church by baptism; and that there is free-will restored, whereby people are able to encline themselves to do good, that men may be more encouraged to set upon good works, and their neglect made inexcusable. All this is indeed forcible against seeking and endeavouring for holiness, by the free-will and power of nature, which is the way of endeavouring, which I directed you to avoid. And if there were no new way to holiness since the fall, original sin might make us despair; but there is a new birth, a new heart, a new creature, and therefore we have directed you to the seeking of holiness by the spirit of Christ, and willing

good freely by a spiritual power as new creatures, partakers of a divine nature in Christ. Yea, 'tis necessary to know the first *Adam*, that we may know the second, *Rom. v. 12*. To believe the fall and original sin, that we may be stirred up to fly to Christ by faith for holiness by free gift, knowing that we cannot attain it by our own power and free will, *2 Cor. i. 9. Mat. ix. 12, 13. Rom. vii. 24, 25. 2 Cor. iii. 5. Eph. v. 14*. There were no need of a new man or a new creation, if the old were not without strength and life, *John iii. 5, 6. Eph. ii. 8*. But original deadness cannot hinder God's working faith and hungerings and thirstings after Christ, by the spirit through the gospel, in those that God chooseth to walk holily and blamelessly before him in love, *1 Thes. i. 4, 5. Acts xxvi. 18*. And so we are made alive in a new head, and become branches of another vine, living to God by the spirit, not by nature.

2. It confirms us in the doctrine of *predestination*, which many deny, because they say it takes men off from endeavours as fruitless, by telling men that all events are predetermined. This argument would be more forcible against endeavours, by the power of our own *free will*, but not at all against endeavours for holiness, by the *operation* of God, giving us faith and all holiness by his own spirit, working in us through Christ. We are to trust on Christ for the grace of the elect, and God's good will towards men, *Mat. iii. 17. Luke ii. 14. Psa l. cvi. 4, 5*. Election by grace destroys seeking

seeking by works, but not by grace, *Rom. xi. 5, 6.* And we are here taught to seek for salvation only in the way of the elect; and we may conclude that holiness is to be had by God's will and not by our own; and it may move us to desire holiness by the will of God, *Rom. ix. 16. Psal. cx. 3.* And seeing it appears by this doctrine of sanctification through Christ, that we are God's workmanship as to all the good wrought in us, *Phil. ii. 12, 13. Eph. ii. 10.* We may well admit that he hath appointed his pleasure from eternity, without infringing the natural liberty of our corrupt wills which reacheth not unto good works, *Acts xv. 18.* compared with 36. man's natural free will may well consist with God's decree, as in paradise, *decretum radice contingentie.*

3. It confirms us in the true doctrine of *Justification and reconciliation with God by faith*, relying on the merits of Christ's blood, without any works of our own; and without considering faith as a work to *procure favour* by the righteousness of the act, but only as a hand to receive the gift, or as the very eating and drinking of Christ actually, rather than any kind of *condition* entitling us to him as our food. This great doctrine of the gospel many hate, as breaking the strongest bonds of holiness, and opening a way to all licentiousness; for they reckon that the conditionality of works, to attain God's favour, and avoid his wrath, and the necessity of them to salvation, are the most necessary and effectual impulsives to all holiness; and they account that the other doctrine

trine opens the flood-gates to licentiousness. And truly this consideration would be of some weight, if people were to be brought to holiness by moral suasion, and their natural endeavours stirred up by the terms of the law, and by slavish fears, and mercenary hopes; for the force of these motives would be altogether enervated by the doctrine of justification by free grace; but I have already shewed, that a man being a guilty dead creature, cannot be brought to serve God out of love, by force of any of these motives, and that we are not sanctified by any of our own endeavours, to work holiness in ourselves, but rather by faith in Christ's death and resurrection, even the same whereby we are justified; and that the urging of the law stirs up sin; and that freedom from it is necessary to all holiness, as the apostle teacheth, *Rom. vi. 11, 14. and vii. 4, 5.* And this way of sanctification confirms the doctrine of justification by faith, as the apostle informeth, *Rom. viii. 1.* For if we are sanctified, and so restored to the image of God and life by the spirit through faith, it is evident that God hath taken us into his favour, and pardoned our sins by the same faith without the law, or else we should not have the fruits and effects of his favour thereby to our eternal salvation, *Rom. viii. 2.* Yea, his justice would not admit his giving life without works, if we were not made righteous in Christ by the same faith. And we cannot trust to have holiness freely given us by Christ upon any rational ground; except we can also trust on the same Christ for free reconciliation, and

and forgiveness of sins for our justification. Neither can guilty cursed creatures, that cannot work by reason of their deadness under the curse, be brought to a rational love of God, except they apprehend his loving them first freely without works, 1 *John* iv. 19. The great objection and reason of so many controversies and books written about it, is, because they think that men will trust to be saved however they live : But sanctification is an effect of justification, and floweth from the same grace ; and we trust for them both by the same faith, and for the latter in order to the former : And such a faith, be it never so confident, tendeth not to licentiousness, but holiness, and we grant that justification by grace destroys holiness by legal endeavours, but not by grace : So that there is no need to live a *Papist* and die an *Antinomian*.

4. It confirms us in the doctrine of *real union with Christ*, so plentifully held forth in scripture, which doctrine some count a vain notion, and cannot endure it, because they think it worketh not holiness, but presumption ; whereas I have shewed that it is absolutely necessary for the enjoyment of spiritual life and holiness which is treasured up in Christ, and that so inseparably, that we cannot have it without a real union with him, 2 *Cor.* xiii. 5. 1 *John* v. 12. *John* vi. 53. *ch.* xv 5. 1 *Cor.* i. 30. *Col.* iii. 11. The members and branches cannot live without union with the vine and head ; nor the stones be part of the living temple, except they be really joined mediately or immediately to the corner-stone.

5. It

5. It confirms us in the doctrine of *certain final perseverance* of the saints, *John* iii. 36. *ch.* vi. 37. and v. 24. *1 John* iii. 9. *1 Thess.* v. 24. *Phil.* i. 6. *John* x. 23, 29. *ch.* iv. 14. They think this doctrine maketh people careless of good works. I answer, It maketh people *careless* of seeking them by *their own natural strength*, and in a way of slavish fear; but *careful* and courageous in trusting on *the grace of God* for them, when they are brought by regeneration heartily to desire them, *Rom.* vi. 14. *Numb.* xiii. 30. setting upon the doing of them in that grace, *1 Thess.* v. 8, 11. And I have shewed that all fears of damnation will never bring persons to work out of love; and that nothing will do it, but a comfortable doctrine.

3dly. It hath this excellent *property*, that it is the *never-failling*, effectually *powerful*, alone *sufficient*, and *sure way to attain to true holiness*. They that have the truth in them, find it, and the truly humbled find it: People strive in vain, when they seek it any other way; therefore venture with the lepers, else you die, *2 Kings* vii. *Isa.* lv. 2, 3, 7. All other ways either stir up sin, or increase despair in you; as seeking holiness by the law, and working under the curse doth; and breeds but slavish and hypocritical obedience at best, and restrains sin only instead of mortifying it, *Gal.* iv. 25. The Jews sought another way, and could not attain it, *Rom.* ix. And all that seek it another way shall ly down in sorrow, *Isa.* l. 11. And that (1.) Because as we are under the law in our natural estate, we are dead and *children of wrath*,
Eph.

Eph. ii. 1, 3. And the law curseth us instead of helping us, *Gal.* iii. 10. and giveth no life by its obligation, *Gal.* iii. 21. And we cannot work holiness in our selves, *Rom.* v. 6. So that an humbled person finds it in vain, to seek holiness by the law or his own strength, for the law is weak through our flesh; seeking a pure life, without a pure nature, is building without a foundation; and there is no seeking a new nature from the law, for it bids us make brick without straw; and saith to the cripple, Walk, without giving any strength. (2.) In this way only God is reconciled to us, even in Christ, *2 Cor.* v. 19. *Eph.* i. 7. And so he loves us, and is a fit object of our love, *1 John* iv. 19. and so in this way only we have a new and divine nature by the spirit of Christ in us, effectually carrying us forth to holiness with life and love, *Rom.* viii. 5. *Gal.* v. 17. *2 Pet.* i. 3, 4. and have new hearts according to the law, so that we serve God heartily according to the new nature, and cannot but serve him, *1 John* iii. 9. So that there is a sure foundation for godliness and love to God, with all our heart, might and soul; and sin is not only restrained but mortified; and not only the outside made clean, but the inside, and the image of God renewed, and holy actings surely follow. We sin not according to the new nature, though we are not perfect in degree, because of the old nature.

4thly, It is a most pleasant way to those that are in it, *Prov.* iii. 27. and that in several respects.

1. It

1. It is a most *plain* way, easie to be found, to one that seeth his own deadness under the law, and is so renewed in the spirit of his mind, as to know and be persuaded of the truth of the gospel; though such may be troubled and pestered with many legal thoughts and workings; yet when they seriously consider things, the way is so plain, that they think it folly and madness to go any other way: So that *the way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein*, Isa. xxxv. 8. Prov. viii. 9. The enlightened soul cannot think of another way when truly humbled, Prov. i. 8. And when we are in Christ, we have his Spirit to be our guide in this way, 1 John ii. 27. John xvi. 13. So that we need not be filled with such distracting thoughts about knowledge of our way, as legal spirits are about thousands of cases of conscience, which do so multiply upon them, that they despair of finding out the way of religion, by reason of so various doubts and manifold Intricacies. Here we may be sure that God will so far teach us out duties, as that we shall not be misled with Error, so as to continue in it to destruction, Psal. xxv. 8, 9, 14. What a trouble is it to a traveller to be doubtful of his way, and without a guide, when his business is of great importance, upon life and death, it is even an heart-breaking: But those that are in this way, may be sure, that though they sometime err, yet they shall not err destructively, but shall discern their way again, Gal. iv. 7, 10.

2. It is *easie* to those that walk in it *by the Spirit*, though it be difficult to get into it by reason

reason of the Opposition of the flesh or devil
scaring us, or seducing us from it. Here you
have holiness as a free gift received by faith,
an act of the mind and soul; whosoever will
may come, take it, and drink freely, and no-
thing is required but a willing mind, *John vii.*
38. Isa. lv. 1. Rev. xxii. 17. But the law is an
intolerable burden, *Mat. xxii. 5. Acts xv. 10.*
if duty be laid on us by its terms. We are not
left in this way to conquer lusts by our endea-
vours, which is a successless work, but what is
duty is given, and the law is turned into pro-
mises, *Heb. viii. Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26. Jer.*
xxxii. 33. and xxxii. 40. We have all now in
Christ, *Col. iii. 11. and ii. 9, 10, 15, 17.* This
is a catholick medicine, instead of a thousand.
How pleasant would this free gift holiness be to
us, if we knew our own wants, and inabilities
and sinfulness? How ready are some to toil
continually, and marcerate their bodies in a me-
lancholy legal way, to get holiness rather than
perish for ever? And therefore how ready should
we be, when it is only *take and have, believe*
and be sanctified and saved, 2 Kings v. 13.
Christ's *burden is light* by his spirit's bearing
it, *Mat. xi. 30.* No weariness, *but renewing of*
strength, *Isa. xl. 31.*

3. It is a *way of peace,* *Prov. iii. 17.* free from
fears and terrors of conscience, that those meet
with unavoidably, who seek salvation by works;
for the law worketh wrath, *Rom. iv. 15.* It is
not the way of *mount Sinai* but of *Jerusalem,*
Heb. xii. 18, 22. The Doubts of Salvation that
people meet with, arise from putting some con-
dition

dition of works between Christ and themselves, as hath appeared in this discourse; but our walking in this way, is by faith, which rejects such fears and doubtings, *John* xiv. 1. *Mark* v. 36. *Heb.* x. 19, 22. It is free from fears of Satan or any evil. *Rom.* viii. 31, 32. And free from slavish fears of perishing by our sins, 1 *John* ii. 1, 2. *Phil.* iv. 6, 7. Faith laying hold on infinite grace, mercy and power to secure us: *The Lord is the keeper and shade on the right hand.* *Psal.* cxxi. 5. Free and powerful grace answers all objections.

4. It is a way that is *paved with love*, like *Solomon's* chariot, *Cant.* iii. 10. We are to set God's loving kindness, and all the gifts of his love, still before our eyes, *Psal.* xxvi. 2. Christ's death, resurrection, intercession before our eyes; which breed *peace, joy, hope, love*, *Rom.* xv. 13. *Ilsa.* xxxv. 10. You must believe for your justification, adoption, the gift of the spirit, and a future inheritance; your death and resurrection with Christ: In believing for these things, your whole way is adorned with flowers, and hath these fruits growing on each side; so that it's through the garden of *Eden*, rather than *the wilderness of Sinai*, *Acts* ix. 31. It is the Office of the spirit our guide, to be our comforter, and not a *spirit of bondage*, *Rom.* viii. 15. peace and joy are great duties in this way, *Phil.* iv. 4, 5, 6. God doth not drive us on with whips and terrors, and the rod of the schoolmaster of the law; but leads us and wins us to walk in his ways, by allurements, *Cant.* i. 3. *Hof.* i. 3, 4. See such allurements, 2 *Cor.* v. 15, *chap.* xi. *Rom.* xii. 1. 5. Our

5. Our very *moving, acting, walking* in this way, is a *pleasure and delight*; every good work is done with pleasure, the very labour of the way is pleasant. Carnal men with duties were not necessary, and they are burthensome to them; but they are pleasant to us, because we do not gain holiness by our own carnal wrestling with our lusts, and crossing them out of carnal fear, with regret and grief, and setting conscience and the law against them, to hinder their actings; but we act naturally, according to the new nature, and perform our new spiritual desires, by walking in the ways of God through Christ: And our lusts and pleasures in sin, are not only restrained, but taken away in Christ; and pleasures in holiness, freely given us and implanted in us, *Rom. viii. 5. Gal. v. 17, 24. John iv. 34. Psal. xl. 3. Psal. cxix. 14, 16, 20.* We have a new taste and flavour, love and liking by the spirit of Christ, and look on the law, not as a burthen, but as our privilege in Christ.

6. *stly, It is a high exalted way above all other ways:* Unto this way the prophet *Habbakuk* is exalted, when upon the failure of all visible helps and supports, he resolves to *rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of his salvation*; and making God his strength by faith, *his feet should be as Hinds feet, and should walk upon his high places, Hab. iii. 18, 19.* These are the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, *that God hath set us in, being quickened and raised up together with him, Eph. ii. 5, 6.*

1. We live high here, for *we live not after the flesh but after the spirit, and Christ in us, with all his fulness*, Rom. viii. 1, 2. Gal. ii. 20. ch. v. 25. We walk in *fellowship with God, dwelling in us, and walking in us*, 2 Cor. vi. 16, 18. And therefore our works are of higher price and excellency, than the works of others, because they are *wrought in God*, John iii. 21. and are the fruits of God's spirit, Gal. v. Phil. i. 11. And we may know that they are accepted and good, by our Gospel principles which others have not, Rom. vii. 6.

2. We are inabled to the most difficult duties, Phil. iv. 1, 3. and nothing is too hard for us. See the great works done by faith, Heb. xi. Mark ix. 23. Works that carnal men think folly and madness to venture upon, (they are so great) and honourable achievements, in doing and suffering for Christ.

3. We walk in an honourable state with God, and on honourable Terms ; not as guilty creatures to get our pardon by works, nor as bond-servants, to earn our meat and drink ; but as sons and heirs, walking towards the full possession of that happiness to which we have a title, and so we have much boldness in God's presence, Gal. iv. 6, 7. We can approach nearer to God than others, and walk before him confidently without slavish fear ; not as strangers, but as such who are of his own family, Eph. ii. 19, 20. And this prompts us to do greater things than others ; *walking as free men*, Rom. vi. 17, 18. John viii. 35, 36. It is a *kingly way* ; the law

law to us, is a royal law, a law of liberty and our privilege, not a bond and yoke of compulsion.

4. It is the way only of those that are honourable and precious in the eyes of the Lord, even his elect and redeemed ones, whose special privilege it is, to walk therein; *No unclean beast goeth there*, Isa. xxxv. 8, 9. No carnal man can walk in this way, but only those that are *taught of God*, John vi. 44, 45, 46. Nor would it have come into our hearts without divine revelation.

5. The preparing this way, cost Christ very dear; it is a costly way, *Heb. x. 19, 20. 1 Pet. iii. 18.*

6. It is a good old way, wherein thou mayest follow the footsteps of all the flock.

7. It is the way to perfection, it leads to such holiness, which shall in a while, be absolutely perfect; it differs only in the degree and manner of manifestation from the holiness of heaven; there the saints live by the same spirit, and the same God is all in all, *1 Cor. xv. 28. John iv. 14.* And have the image of the same spiritual man, *1 Cor. xv. 49.* Only here we *have but the first fruits of the spirit*, Rom. viii. 23. *And live by faith and not by sight*, *2 Cor. v. 7.* *And are not full grown in Christ*, *Eph. iv. 13.* Sanctification in Christ is Glorification begun, as Glorification is Sanctification perfected.

The DOCTRINE of JUSTIFICATION

Opened and Applied.

ROM. iii. 23, 24, 25, 26.

23. *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*
 24. *Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.*
 25. *Whom God hath set forth for a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.*
 26. *To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.*

THE apostle having confuted and overthrown all justification either of Jew or Gentile by works, in the foregoing discourse, is now proving what he asserted, ver. 21, 22. viz. that the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference. Shewing that now in the gospel-times there is no difference between Jew and Gentile, but that in the justification of both, the

The Doctrine of Justification, &c. 357

the righteousness of God without the law is manifested. This he proveth by shewing what the gospel teacheth concerning the way of justification; for the gospel only reveals the righteousness of God, *Rom. i. 16, 17. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith.*

So the words are a declaration of the gospel-way of justification, by the righteousness of God: And that so clearly and fully, and the benefit spoken of so great and glorious, being the first benefit that we receive by union with Christ, and the foundation of all other benefits; that my text is accounted to be *Evangelium Evangelii*, a principal part of the written gospel, as briefly and yet fully expressing this excellent point more than any other text.

Note in the words particularly the subject declared and explained, *viz.* justification of persons, or their being justified. And the meaning of it here, is to be cleared and freed from all ambiguities and misunderstanding. Justification signifieth making just, as sanctification is making holy, glorification making glorious. But not making just by infusion of grace and holiness into a person, as the papists teach, confounding justification and sanctification together; but making just in trial and judgment, by a judicial sentence discharging guilt, freeing from blame and accusation; approving, judging, owning and pronouncing a person to be righteous. Use alters the signification from the notation. It is a juridical word or law term, and

158 The Doctrine of Justification

hath reference to trial and judgment, 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4. *It is with me a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: Yea I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing of my self, yet am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me is the Lord.* And it is so opposed to condemnation in judgment, Deut. xxv. 1. *If there be a controversie between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them, then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked.* And Mat. xii. 37. *By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.* And it is opposed both to accusation and condemnation. Rom. viii. 33, 37. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? Who is he that condemneth? And so Job ix. 20. If I justify my self, mine own mouth shall condemn me. Job xiii. 15. I will maintain mine own ways before him. ver. 18. I have ordered my cause, and I know I shall be justified. ver. 19. Who is he that will plead with me?* Here justification is plainly opposed unto the accusation or fault; and it is as plainly opposed to the passing sentence of condemnation, 1 Kings viii. 32. *Do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked so bring his way upon his head, and justifying the righteous to give him according to his righteousness.* In this sense it is a sin to justify the wicked, Isa. v. 23. Prov. xvii. 15. Job xxvii. 5. Actions must be existent already, and brought to trial that they may be justified, Job xxxiii. 32. Isa. xlii. 9, 26.

Justice or righteousness consists not in the intrinsic nature of an action; but in its agreeable-

nels

ness to a rule of judgment; so that actions are called just and righteous by an extrinsecal denomination with relation to God's rule of judging; and this righteousness appears by trying the action according to the rule, and by making an estimate of it; which estimate is either approving or disapproving, justifying or condemning, finding it to be sin, or no sin, or breach of the law; so we may say of the righteousness of persons, with reference to such habits or actions. And because the righteousness of righteous persons appears when they are brought to trial and judgment, therefore they are said then to be in a special manner justified, as if they were then made righteous; viz. when their righteousness is declared, as Christ was said to be begotten of the son of God at the resurrection, *Acts* xiii. 33. because he was then declared to be the son of God, *Rom.* i. 4. and in the same sense we that are adopted at present, are said to wait for our adoption, i. e. the manifestation of it, *Rom.* viii. 23. And thus even God is said to be justified, when we judge of his actions as we so ought to do, and deem them to be righteous, *Job* xxxii. 2. *Psal.* li. 4. *Luke* vii. 29. tho' nothing can be added to the infinite righteousness of God. And wisdom is said to be justified by her children, *Matth.* xii. 19. So justification is not a *real* change of a sinner in himself, (tho' a real change is annexed to it) but only a *relative* change with reference to God's judgment. And thus the word is used in the text, and so also in matters of judicature thro' out the scripture; yea, some contend a-

360. *The Doctrine of Justification*

gainst the papists, that it is no where in scripture used otherwise, except by a trope borrowed from this as the proper sense: And in the text it's beyond all doubt, meant of being *deemed* and *accounted* just in the sight of God; for such a justification is here only treated of, as appears in the text, and before, *ver.* 19, 20. And I have been the longer explaining the sense of the word, because the mistaking it, by reason of its composition, occasioned that popish error, whereby the benefit signified by it is obscured, yea, overthrown; so that we had need to contend for the sense of the word.

In the text we have,

1. The *persons justified*, (1.) *Sinners*. (2.) *Such sinners of all sorts that shall believe, whether Jews or Gentiles.*
2. The *justifier* or *efficient* cause, *God.*
3. The *impulsive* cause, *grace.*
4. The means effecting, or *material* cause, *the redemption of Christ.*
5. The *formal* cause, *the remission of sins.*
6. The *instrumental* cause *faith.*
7. The *time* of declaring, *the present time.*
8. The *end*, that God may appear *just.*

From hence therefore will arise several useful observations all tending to explain the nature of justification, which shall be laid down, and cleared out of the text, and confirmed particularly, and then I shall make use of them all together.

Observ. 1. *They who are justified are sinners, such who are come short of the glory of God, i. e. of God's approbation, John v. 44. of God's image of holiness, 2 Cor. iii. 28. Eph. iv. 24.*

of eternal happiness, 2 *1 Thess.* ii. 12. *Rom.* v. 2. *2 Cor.* iv. 17.

1. The law condemns all sinners, and strikes them dead as with a thunder bolt, *Rom.* iii. 20. and adjudgeth them to shame, confusion, and misery, instead of glory and happiness, by the strict terms of it, *Rom.* ii. 6, — 9, 11, 12. which none fulfils, neither can do, *Rom.* viii. 7. neither Jews nor Gentiles; there is no hope, if free grace restore them not.

2. Christ came only to save sinners, and died for this end, *Rom.* v. 6. *When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly;* and *1 Tim.* i. 15. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.* *Mat.* ix. 13. *I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.* *Mat.* xviii. 11. *The Son of man is come to save that which was lost.* And God must be believed on to salvation, as a God that justifieth the ungodly, he must believe as one that worketh not, on him that justifieth the ungodly *Rom.* iv. 5.

Observ. 11. Sinners of all sorts, without difference, whether Jews or Gentiles, that believe, are the subjects of this Justification. This is the scope of the apostle, to shew, that whereas Jews and Gentiles were universally condemned by the light and law of nature, or the law written; so the righteousness of God is upon all them that believe, *ver.* 21, 22. without difference. This was a great point to be defended against the Jews in the apostles time, who appropriated justification to themselves, in a legal way, and to such as were proselytes to the law and

and circumcision; and therefore the apostle *Paul* vehemently urged it, *Rom. x. 11, 12.* and it was a point newly revealed to the apostles, that the *Gentiles* might be accepted without turning *Jews*, and much prized as a very glorious revelation, *Acts x. 28, 45. Eph. iii. 4, 5, 8. Col. i. 25, 26, 27.* And it is confirmed,

1. Because notwithstanding the *Jews* privilege of the law, by reason of breaking the law, they had as much need of free justification as the *Gentiles*, and no worthiness above the *Gentiles* by their works, but were rather greater sinners, *Rom. iii. 23, 24.* and when there is equal need and worth, God might righteously justify one as well as another, *Rom. iii. 9.*

2. God is the God of the *Gentiles* as well as of the *Jews*, *Rom. iii. 29.* as he promised, *Rom. iv. 9, 12, 13. Gal. iii. 8. Isa. xix. 25. Zach. xiv. 9.*

3. *Abraham* was justified before he was circumcised, that he might be the father of those that believe tho' uncircumcised, that they might inherit the same blessing, *Rom. iv. 10, 11, 12.*

4. This will appear farther, by shewing that justification is only by faith, and without dependence upon the law, merely by the righteousness of another; and so *Jews* and *Gentiles* are alike capable of it.

Observe III. That the justifier or efficient cause of justification is God. It is an act of God, *Rom. viii. 33.* It is God that justifieth, he only can justify authoritatively and irreversibly.

1. Because he is the law-giver, and hath power to save and destroy, *James iv. 12.* this case concerns God's law, and can only be tried at his tribunal

tribunal, he is the judge of the world, *Gen. xviii.*

25. It is a small worthless thing to be justified by man, or by our selves merely, *1 Cor. iv. 3, 4.*

2. To him the debt of suffering for sin, and acting righteousness, is owed. And therefore he only can give a discharge for payment, or a release of the debtor, *Pfal. li. 4. Mark ii. 7.*

*Observ. IV. God justifieth souls freely by his grace, Δωρεάν τῇ δυνάμει χάρις, freely by his grace; one of these expressions had been enough, but this redoubling it sheweth the importance of the truth, to quicken our attention the more. Here is the impulsive cause of justification, and his free manner of bestowing it accordingly. And this signifies God's free undeserved favour, in opposition to any works of our righteousness, whereby it might be challenged as a debt to us, *Rom. iv. 4.* Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt, *Chap. 11. 6.* if by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work, *Eph. ii. 8, 9.* By grace ye are saved thro' faith; and that not of your selves; it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast. *2 Tim. i. 9.* Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began, *ver. 10.* But is now made manifest by the appearing, &c. Grace is mercy and love shewed freely, out of God's proper motion, shewing mercy
be.*

364 *The Doctrine of Justification*

because he will shew mercy; and loving us, because he will love us, *Rom. ix. 15.* And this is confirmed,

1. Because there was not, nor is any thing in us but what might more move God to condemn us, for we have all sinned, *Eph. ii. 3. Ezek. xvi. 6.*

2. Because God would take away boasting, and have his grace glorified and exalted in our salvation; he will have all the praise and glory, tho' we have the blessedness, *Eph. ii. 7, 9.* *That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us thro' Jesus Christ; and so Rom. iii. 27.*

Obser. V. God justifieth sinners thro' the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth for a propitiation thro' faith in his blood. This is the effecting means, or material cause of our Justification, viz. Redemption and Propitiation thro' the blood of Christ, which is the righteousness of God treasured up in him.

By redemption is meant properly such a deliverance as is by paying a price; and so the words redeem and redemption are frequently used, *Exod. xiii. 13. Numb. iii. 48, 49, 51. Lev. xxv. 24, 51, 52. Jer. xxxii. 7, 8. Neh. v. 8.* from this proper signification it is borrowed to signify a deliverance without price, *Luke xxi. 28. Eph. 1. 14. Chap. iv. 30.* or rather by a metonymy of the cause, put for the highest effect, the state of glory; so that the state of glory is called redemption, as being the completing and crowning effect of Christ's redemption

tion, therefore it is called the purchased possession.

By a *Propitiation* is meant that which appeaseth the wrath of God for sin, and wins his favour; and this propitiation of Christ was two ways typified; First in the propitiatory sacrifices whose blood was shed; and secondly, by the mercy-seat, which was called the propitiation, because it covered the ark wherein was the law; and the blood of the sacrifices for attonement was sprinkled by the high-priest before it; and this mercy-seat was a sign of God's favourableness to a sinful people, in residing among them, and was called, *יִלְפֻנֶינָם*, *Heb. ix. 5*

Now this doctrine appears confirmed for these *Reasons*.

1. Because Christ by the will of God gave himself a ransom for us, to redeem us from sin and punishment, wrath and curse *Tit. ii. 14.* He gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity; He gave himself to death for us, was delivered for our Offences; his death was the price of our redemption, that we might be justified in God's sight; God gave him up to death, he spared him not, that he might be made righteousness, *1 Cor. i. 30.* and *Mat. xx. 20.* He gave his own life a ransom for many. And so *1 Tim. ii. 6.* He bought us with this price. *1 Cor. vi. 6.* He redeemed us not with silver and gold, but with his precious blood, as of a lamb without spot. *1 Pet. i. 18, 19.* *2 Pet. ii. 1.* *Rev. v. 9.* He suffered the penalty due to us for sin. *1 Pet. ii. 24.* He bare our sins in his body on the tree. *Gal. iii. 13.* He was made

made a curse for us. and thereby redeemed us from the curse of the Law; and that he might be made a Curse, he was made sin for us, 2 Cor. v. 21. Isa. liii. 5, 6. He subjected himself to the law, both in active, as well as passive Obedience, Gal. iv. 4. And obeyed his father even to death, doing and suffering at his Commandment, John xiv. 31. Heb. x. 7. And his obedience was for our justification. Compare Rom. v. 19. with Phil. iii. 8, 9. So Christ satisfied, both for our debt of righteousness, and debt of punishment, for our faultiness, taint of sin, and want of righteousness, as well as for our guilt and obnoxiousness to punishment, that we might be free from wrath, and deemed righteous in God's sight; his suffering was the consummating act of redemption, and so all is attributed to it, Heb. ii. 9, 10. Even to his blood, tho' other doings and sufferings concur, 2 Cor. viii. 9. We are righteous by him, as we were guilty by Adam, Rom. v. 12.

2. God accepted this price as a satisfaction to his justice, which he shewed in raising Christ from the dead, and so acquitting him from all our sins; he was justified in the spirit, 1 Tim. iii. ult. for us, Rom. iv. ult. raised for our justification, see Rom. viii. 33, 34. *It is God that Justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen from the dead. And Heb. x. 14. By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. And Eph. v. 2. This sacrifice was a sweet smelling savour unto God. If Christ had sunk under the weight of our sins, and not been raised*

raised, the payment had not been finished, and so the debt not discharged, *John xxi. 10. Of righteousness, because I go to my father.*

3. This redemption is in Christ, as to the benefit of it; so that it can't be had, except we be in Christ, and have Christ: So the text expresseth, and sheweth that he is the propitiation, and as so, he is our righteousness, *1 Cor. i. 30. We have redemption and righteousness in him, Eph. i. 7. 2 Cor. v. 21. And therein our freedom from condemnation, Rom. viii. 1. Christ dyed that his seed might be justified, Isa. liii. 10, 11. those that are in him by spiritual regeneration, 1 Cor. iv. 15.*

Observ. VI. The formal cause of justification, or that wherein it consists, is the remission of Sin, i. e. not only the guilt and punishment is removed, but the fault; because 'tis a pardon grounded on justice, which cleareth the fault also. By him we are justified from all things that the law chargeth us with, Acts xiii. 39.

In men subject to a law, there is no middle condition between not imputing sin and imputing righteousness; and so these terms are used as equivalent. *Acts xiii. 38, 39. Thro' this man is preached forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified, &c. Rom. iv. 6, 8. 2 Cor. v. 19, 21. Rom. v. 17. This is thro' the blood-shed of Christ, Eph. i. 7. Mat. xxvi. 28.*

Obser. VII. God justifieth a sinner thro' Faith in Christ's Blood. Faith is the instrumental

368 The Doctrine of Justification

mental cause of receiving this benefit, faith in the blood of Christ.

1. This Faith is believing on Christ, that we may be justified by him, *Gal. ii. 16.* Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ; even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; we believe in Christ for justification, out of a sense of our inability to obtain justification by works.

2. This faith doth not justify us, as an act of righteousness, earning and procuring our justification by the work of it; for this would have been justification by works, as under the Law; diametrically opposite to grace, and free gift, which excludes all consideration of any works of ours, to be our righteousness under any denomination or diminutive terms whatever, whether you call it legal or evangelical, tho' you reckon it no more than the payment of a pepper-corn, *Rom. xi. 6.* Faith in this case is counted a not-working, *Rom. ix. 3.* And it is not faith that stands in stead of the righteousness of the law, but the righteousness of Christ which satisfieth for what we ought to have done or suffered, as hath been shewed.

3. God justifieth by faith, as the instrument whereby we receive Christ, and his righteousness, by which we are justified properly; and we are justified by faith only metonymically, by reason of the righteousness received by it; and to be justified by faith and by Christ is all one, *Gal. iii. 8.* *Rom. v. 17.* By faith we receive

re-

remission of sins, *Acts* xxvi. 18. and *Chap.* x. 43. Its effect is the reception of justification, not the working it; as a man may be said to be maintained by his hands, or nourished by his mouth, when those do but receive that which nourisheth, his food and drink; the cup is put for the liquor in the cup, *1 Cor.* xi. 26, 27. See *Rom.* i. 17. and iii. 22. Christ is in us by faith, *Eph.* iii. 17. received, eat, drink, *John* i. 12. *Chap.* vi. 50, 51, 53.

4. This faith is to be understood *exclusively*, to all our works for justification; we defend, against the Papists, justification *by faith only*; and there is nothing more fully expressed in scripture phrase, *Rom.* iii. 28. *Gal.* ii. 16. *Phil.* iii. 8, 9. *Rom.* iv. 16.

5. We must understand faith in a full sense of receiving remission of the *fault*, as well as of the *punishment*; we believe, God accounts not the fault to us of the least sin; and where faith is said to be accounted for righteousness, it is because of the object it receives, *Rom.* iv. 5, 6, 7, 8. *2 Cor.* v. 19, 21. We believe Christ's righteousness is imputed to us, as our sins are to him; or else we receive not remission of sins by believing, which is contrary to charging us with sin and condemnation; which charging signifieth imputing sin, *Rom.* viii. 33, 34. together with the removal of the charge of sin, we receive the gift of righteousness, *Rom.* v. 17. and this we have in the reception of Christ's redemption and blood-shed, *Eph.* i. 7. *Mat.* xxvi. 28.

Observ. VIII. That God in setting forth Christ as a propitiation thro' faith in his blood, aimed to declare his righteousness now under the

370 *The Doctrine of Justification*

gospel, for the remission of sins that are past, as well as present. Of those Sins that were past and committed under the Old Testament, which was God's time of forbearing, in pardoning long before his justice was actually satisfied by Christ's atonement, *Heb. xiii. 8. Rev. xiii. 8. Mat. xviii. 26.* The ground of those pardons is now revealed by Christ's coming, *Isa. lii. 5, 6. and lvi. 1. Dan. ix. 24. 2 Tim. i. 9, 10.* that those Pardons may be no blemish to the justice of God now satisfied, *Exod. xxxiv. 7. Psal. lxxxv. 10.*

1. By his righteousness is meant that righteousness of God mentioned in the proposition, *Rom. iii. 21, 22.* of which the Text is but a confirmation, *viz:* the righteousness of God; not his essential righteousness, that which is an essential property of God, but a righteousness which is upon all them that believe; Christ's righteousness which is the end of the law, *Rom. x. 3, 4.* and therefore called God's righteousness; that which Christ wrought for us, which is given to us, and we receive by faith; that whereby Christ answered the Law for us, by which as the price he redeemed us; which is called God's righteousness, because it is of God's working, and it only hath God's acceptance and approbation. As Christ is called the lamb of God, because God provided him and accepts him as an offering, *John i. 29.* Upon the like account Christ's kingdom is called the kingdom of God, because God's own hand sets it up, and maintains it, and rules it, *Eph. v. 5.* Christ who became obedient to death, to work this righteousness, was God as well as man; *Phil. ii. 6, 8.* And this is that righteousness which the apostle opposeth to his own, *that which is in Christ,*
which

which he had thro' faith; and this is the righteousness of God here, and in other places, the righteousness which is of God by faith, *Phil. iiii. 9.*

2. God aimed at *declaring*, in gospel-times, *his righteousness in forgiving sins past*, in the time of God's forbearance under the Old Testament, *Rom. ii. 25.* and also in justifying those that believe in Christ at present: For it was by the righteousness of the same Christ, that sins were pardoned under the Old Testament, as well as now, *Heb. xiii. 8.* Christ was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, *Rev. xiii. 8.* only the righteousness was not actually fulfilled and revealed then, but it was shadowed out then, by the sacrifices, ransoms, redemptions, &c. *Heb. x. 1, 2, 3, 9, 10.* So this was a time of God's forbearance, because he pardoned sins, as it were, without present payment and satisfaction. He had patience and did not exact the debt, until Christ paid all, *Mat. xviii. 26.* but then God promised that he would reveal his righteousness in due time, *Isa. lvi. 1. Chap. li. 5, 6. Psal. xcvi. 2. Dan. ix. 24* and this he hath done by the appearance of Christ, *2 Tim. i. 10.*

Observ. IX. The end of this manifestation is, that God may appear just, in forgiving sins past as well as present, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Here, the essential property of God is exalted, and appears glorious, in justifying by the forementioned righteousness of God.

1. As God justifieth freely by grace, he would appear hereby just in justifying sinners; for it would be a blemish to God's justice to forgive without a satisfaction, and righteousness performed; and therefore tho' he be gracious and mer-

372 The Doctrine of Justification

ciful, yet he will not clear the guilty, *Exod.* xxxiv. 7. *Gen.* xviii. 25. *Exod.* xxiii. 7. And so the saints of God concluded, that God had a righteousness and redemption whereby he forgave sin, tho' it was not then revealed, *Psal.* li. 14. *Psal.* cxxx. 7, 8. & cxliii. God would have justice and mercy to meet in our salvation, *Psal.* lxxxv. 10.

2. God would have it appear that he *only* is just, and therefore saveth us, not by our own righteousness, but by his, which is indeed the more exalted by our unrighteousness occasionally, tho' God is not therefore unrighteous in taking vengeance, *Rom.* iii. 5. *Dan.* ix. 7.

3. God would appear to be the only procurer and worker of our righteousness, and so our justifier by way of procurement, as well as by way of judgment, and so he will justify us by a righteousness of his own, and not by our own, *Isa.* liv. 17. *Ch.* xlv. 22, 24, 25. that we may glory in the Lord only, *1 Cor.* i. 30, 31.

Use I. It serves for instruction, by way of encouragement and consolation. That the great happiness of those that are in Christ, is, that their sins are forgiven, and they accounted just in the sight of the judge of all the world, thro' the redemption that is by the blood of Christ; and this benefit contains all blessedness of life, and the consequences thereof. *Rom.* iv. 6. That man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, hath a blessedness therein, and such an extensive blessedness, in regard of the spiritual part, as *Abraham* had, comprehending all spiritual blessings in Christ, for they that be of faith are blessed with faithful *Abraham*,

ham, Gal. iii. 9. for this righteousness, being the fundamental blessing, is revealed from faith to faith; and they that are by faith just and justified thro' that righteousness, do live by faith, always receiving it, and receiving nourishment and comfort by it, Rom. i. 17.

1. They are delivered from the charge of sin and fault before God, Rom. viii. 33, 34. τίς ἐγκαλεῖται, who shall lay any thing to their Charge, or be suffered to bring in at God's tribunal any indictment, charge or accusation against them? 'Tis God that justifieth them, and Christ hath dyed and rose again. They are redeemed from among men, being the first fruits to God and the Lamb; in their mouth there is no guile, and they are without fault, ἄμωμοι, before the throne of God, Rev. xiv. 5. See also Col. 1. 2.

2. They are delivered from all condemnation in sentence and execution; the curse and wrath of God. Gal. iii. 13. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. 1 Thes. i. 10. Jesus who hath delivered us from the wrath to come. Psal. lxxxv. 3. Thou hast taken away all thy wrath; thou hast turned thy self from the Fierceness of thine anger. See ver. 5, 6. The Wrath of God is an unsupportable burden, and the foundation of all miseries, which foundation is razed, and a foundation of blessedness laid, whereby we have peace with God, and are fully reconciled to God, Rom. v. 1, 2 Cor. v. 18, 19. Col. i. 21, 22. Ye who were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh thro' death, to present you holy and blame-

374 The Doctrine of Justification

able and unreprouable in his sight. Now where there is no blame before God, there can be no wrath from God.

3. They have no need to seek salvation by the works of the law, and so are delivered from a yoke that cannot be born; from endless observances that *pharisees* and *papists* have heaped up; from continual frights, doubts, fears and terrors, by the law, *Acts* xv. 10. *Rom.* viii. 15. from a wrath working law, *Rom.* iv. 15. from a sin-irritating Law, *Rom.* vii. 5. from a killing law, a ministration of death and condemnation, *2 Cor.* iii. 6, 7, 9. Mount *Sinai*, which gendreth to bondage, *Gal.* iv. 24.

4. Hence they are delivered from a condemning conscience, which otherwise would still gnaw them as a worm. *Heb.* ix. 14. If the blood of bulls and goats, sanctified to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who thro' the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, &c. A guilty conscience is a foul conscience, and it will make all services and duties dead works, unfit for the service of the living God; it is the blood of Christ applied by faith, that takes off this foulness of guilt from the conscience, therefore the blood of Christ hath the only efficacy this way, to take off the conscience of Sin, *Heb.* ix. 12, 3, 4, &c. Hence they come to have a good conscience, *1 Pet.* iii. 21. void of offence toward God, *Acts* xxiv. 16.

5. It is an everlasting righteousness, by which their standing in Christ is secured, *Dan.* ix. 24. It is an eternal redemption that is obtained, so *Heb.* ix. 12. whereas by the law those that were

justi-

justified to day typically, might fall under condemnation so far as to need another sacrifice for sin to morrow; they had no real purgation of conscience from sin by those sacrifices, and therefore could not have a lasting delivery of their consciences from guilt by them: Here it is far otherwise, here is an effectual, complete, and perpetual redemption, reaching the conscience of the sinner, and for the purging away all sins *past, present, and to come*, 1 John i. 7.

6. It is a righteousness of infinite value, because it is the righteousness of one that is God, and his name is *Jehovah* our righteousness, *Jer. xxiii. 6. Heb. ix. 14.* It is therefore more powerful to save than *Adam's* sin was to destroy or condemn, *Rom. v.* Christ is here the power of God, 1 *Cor. i. 24.* hence we are powerful, and conquer by faith: Likewise there's a marvelous plenty of mercy and grace, that is brought to us by *Jehovah* our righteousness, plenteous redemption, *Psal. cxxx. 7.* it must be most plentiful because infinite; tho' no creature could satisfy for sin, yet *Jehovah* could do it abundantly, and therefore in Christ God's mercy prevails high above our sins, *Psal. ciii. 11, 12.*

7. God's grace and justice are both engaged on our behalf in this righteousness; justice is terrible, and seems to be against mercy, and dreadful to natural people, but it is otherwise to believers; it is pacified and appeased thro' this righteousness, it is satisfied by Christ for our sins. Justice becomes our friend, joins in with grace, and instead of pleading against us, it is altogether for us, and it speaks contrary to what it speaks to sinners out of Christ, *Josh. xxiv. 19, 20.* We

may also plead justice for forgiveness thro' mercy in Christ, *Rom. iii. 26.*

8. We may be sure of holiness and glory, of delivery from the power and dominion of sin, as well as the charge of it before God, and guilt in our own consciences, for this was the end of Christ's death, *Tit. ii. 14. Rom. vi. 6, 14. viii. 3, 4, 30. Whom he justified, them he also glorified*: The law was the strength of sin, for sin had its title to rule in us by reason of the curse, and thence satan also rules; but here is our deliverance from sin and satan, yea from death too, *Heb. ii. 14 15. Hos. xiii. 14.* And by the same reason we are raised by this excellent righteousness, to a better state than we had in *Adam* at first, for Christ died that we might receive the adoption of sons, and the spirit, that we might be brought under a new covenant, and be set in the right way of holiness, serving out of love, *Gal. iii. 14. 1 John iv. 19. Gal. iv. 5. Heb. ix. 15. Rom. v. 11. Luke i. 74. Col. ii. 13.*

9. We may be sure hence of a concurrence of all things for our good, all things shall work for good, thro' grace, to bring us to glory, because God is for us, who is the creator and governour of all things, *Rom. viii. 28, 31, 33.* God will never be wroth with us, nor rebuke us in anger any more, *Isa. liv. 9. Rom. v. 2—5.*

10. Hence we may come before God without confusion of face, yea, with boldness to the throne of grace in Christ's name, *John xiv. 13, 14.* and expect all good things from him, *Eph. iii. 12. In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by faith in him. Heb. x. 22, 23.* Let us draw nigh with full assurance of faith,
Christ's

Christ's blood pleads for us in heaven, *Hab. xii. 24.* and we may, and are to plead boldly, a satisfaction on his account.

11. We live in those times when this righteousness is fully revealed, and sin made an end of, *Rom. iii. 21, 22.* this is our happiness above those that lived before Christ's coming, who were under types and shadows of this righteousness, when we have the substance in its own light, and so we are not under the law, which they were under as a school-master, we are not servants but sons, called to liberty, *Gal. iii. 23, 26.* and *iv. 7.* and *v. 13.* The preaching the old covenant as a church ordinance to be urged, now is cealed, the law is not to be preached now, in the same terms as *Moses* preached it, for justification, *Rom. x. 3, 6, 7, 8.* *2 Cor. iii. 6, 7.* *Gal. iii. 12, 24.* it is contrary in terms of faith, tho' it were subservient.

Use II. For examination, whether we be in Christ, and have received this justification by faith with all our hearts.

1. Consider whether you be made really sensible of sin, and your condemnation by the law. This is necessary to make us fly to Christ, and for this as one great end, was the law given, *Gal. iii. 22, 23, 24.* *Mat. ix. 13.* *Acts ii. 37.* without sense of sin there will be no prizing of Christ, or desire of holiness, but rather abuse of grace to carnal security and licentiousness; those that were stung with the fiery serpents, looked up to the brazen serpent.

2. Dost thou trust only upon free mercy for justification in God's sight, renouncing all thy works, whatever, in this point, as not able to stand in them before God's exact justice, crying mercy with

378 *The Doctrine of Justification*

with the poor publican? Perfectionists and self-righteous persons, have no share in this matter, *Luke xviii. 13, 14.* Paul, notwithstanding all that the world might think he had to plead for himself, yet he counted all but dung that he might win Christ, and be found in him not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is of the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, i. e. the redeeming and propitiation righteousness of Christ, whereby he desired only to be justified, and which he believed in for that end, opposing it to any thing inherent in himself, which therefore he calls his own righteousness, *Phil. iii. 6, 8, 9. Rom. iv. 5.*

3. Dost thou trust with any confidence in Christ, not continuing in a mere suspence? In a way of mere doubting we can receive no good thing from God, *James i. 6, 7.* mere doubting will not loose the conscience from the guilt of sin, *Heb. x. 22.* but leaveth the soul under terrors. *Abraham's* confidence is the example and pattern of our justifying faith, that we should endeavour to come up unto, believing with a fullness of perswasion in hope against hope, *Rom. iv. 20, 24.* tho' a believing soul may be assaulted with many doubtings, yet it fights against them, and doth not give up it self to the dominion of them, *Psal. xlii. 11. Mark ix. 24.* it hath always some thing contrary to them and striving with them.

4. Dost thou come to Christ for remission of sins, for the right end, namely, that thou may'st be freed from the dominion of sin before the having God? *Heb. ix. 14. Psal. cxxx. Tit. ii.*

14. 1 *Pet.* ii. 24. otherwise thou dost not receive it for the right end, and desirest not really the favour and enjoyment of God, and to be in friendship with him.

5. Dost thou walk in holiness, and strive to evidence this justification by the fruits of faith, in good works; otherwise thy faith is but a dead faith, for a true faith purifieth the heart, *Acts* v. 9. If Christ be thine, he will be sanctification as well righteousness, *1 Cor.* i. 30. *Rom.* viii. 1, 9. *John* xiii. 8. If God has taken thee into his favour, he will doubtless cleanse thee; tho' faith alone justifies, without the concurrence of works to the act of justification, yet that faith is not so alone as not to be accompanied with good works. As the eye alone seeth, yet it is not alone without other members. So the apostle *James* declareth faith that is alone to be dead, and biddeth us shew our faith by our works; which is to be understood, not as if works were the conditions of attaining justification, but sure evidences of justification attained by faith, and very necessary, *James* ii. 14, 15. The gospel is no covenant of works, requiring another righteousness for justification by doing for life: Works justify us from such accusations of men, as will deny us to have justification by faith, or that we have a true and lively faith, or are good trees, *Matt.* xii. 33, 37. not as being our righteousness themselves, or conditions of our having Christ's righteousness, or qualifying us for it.

Use III. It serveth for exhortation to several duties.

1. To the wicked: It is dehortation unto them from continuance in sin, under God's wrath, running

ning headlong to damnation; for there is a door of mercy opened to them, a righteousness prepared, that they may be freely accepted of God. Some men are desperadoes; *they have loved strangers, and after them they will go*, Jer. ii. 25. they are resolved to run the risque of it, and please themselves, that they shall speed as well as others: And some men would be justified, but seek for it a wrong way; some will go to the Pope to quiet their consciences by his deceits; some to their own works and performances; but you are exhorted to look out for the true righteousness. Christ saith in the gospel, *Behold me, Behold me*; the kingdom of heaven is open, mercy and righteousness are freely offered, *Isa. lv. 6, 7. Jer. iii. 12.* Repentance is preached with remission of sins, *Luke xxiv. 47. Acts ii. 38.* Beware you do not neglect this acceptable time, this day of salvation, *Heb. ii. 1, 3.* For,

1. If you do, you remain under the wrath of God, *John iii. 36.* under the curse of the law, which, like a flood, sweeps away all that are found out of this ark; the Lord Jesus Christ, *Psal. xi. 5, 6.*

2. Your condemnation will be aggravated by refusing so great salvation, *Heb. ii. 3.* you will have no cloke for your sins when you refuse mercy, *John. xv. 22.* you cannot say you are undone by your past sins beyond recovery, and therefore it is in vain to strive, for behold remission of sins is proclaimed unto you, *Ezek. xxxiii. 10, 11.* and what an horrid sin is it to despise the blood of the Son of God? *John iii. 18, 36.*

Obj. I. *If God justifie the ungodly*, Rom. vi. 5. *what need I forsake ungodliness at all*, Rom. vi. 1.

A.

A. Thou canst not seek justification truly, except thou hast a mind to live to God in friendship with him; for justification is God's way of taking us into friendship with him, *Rom. v. 1, 2.* and of reconciling us, *Cor. v. 19.* The use thou art to make of it, is to seek God's friendship by it, and the enjoyment of him; why doth a man seek a pardon, if he intend to go on in rebellion, and stand out in defiance to his prince? *1 Pet. ii. 24.* They seek pardon in a mocking way, that intend not to return to obedience, *Gal. vi. 7. 8.*

Obj. II, *My sins are so great that I have no encouragement to hope.*

A. Christ's righteousness is for all sorts of sinners that believe, whether Jews or Gentiles; and how great sinners were of both sorts? *Rom. i. 2.* and chap. iii. and even for those that killed and murdered the Lord of glory, *Acts ii. 23, 36. 1 Cor. ii. 8.* for the chief of sinners, *1 Tim. i. 15. Acts xvi.* Where sin abounds, grace superabounds, *Rom. v. 20.* your sins are but the sins of a creature, but his righteousness is the righteousness of God, *John vi. 37. Rom. x. 3. 11. 13.*

Exhort. II. *It exhorts those that have a mind to turn to God, to turn the right way, by faith in Christ for justification.* Let them not seek by works as most in the world do, and all are prone to do, *Rom. ix. 31, 32.* But this doctrine seems very foolish, yea, pernicious to a natural man. *Become a fool that thou mayst be wise,* *1 Cor. iii. 18.* Otherwise you will labour in the fire, and weary your selves for very vanity, and be under continual discomforts and discouragements; for you can do no good work while you are in the flesh, under the law, and its curse, before God have received you in to favour, for justification is in order of nature before true holiness of heart and life, *1 Tim. i. 5. Heb. ix. 14.* Faith is the great work and mother duty, *John vi. 29. Gal. v. 6. Isa. lv 2, &c.* Therefore while you believe not, you dishonour Christ and his death, *Gal. ii. 21. Chap. v. 2, 3, 4.* therefore come boldly, tho' you have

382. *The Doctrine of Justification*

have been a great sinner, *Acts* x. 34. and seek righteousness in Christ with holiness, *Rom.* viii. 1.

Q. But how shall I get faith?

A. Faith is the gift of God, *Eph.* ii. 8. and by the gospel, *Rom.* i. 15, 16, 17. Faith comes by hearing the gospel preached; *Rom.* x. 17. and that comes, in working faith, not in word only, but in power, *1 Thes.* i. 5. beyond what can be done by natural or humane attainment, *John* vi. 63. Therefore if thou hast no beginning of it in thee, thy only way is to attend to the gospel, and to meditate on thy sin and misery, and Christ's excellency, that so thou mayst be inclined in thy heart to believe, *Song* i. 3. *Gal.* ii. 16, *Psal.* ix. 10. for this is the way God useth to beget faith, *Isa.* lv. 3. But if thou hast a desire and inclination, to fly from thy self to Christ, in the bent of thy heart, so that thou preferrest Christ above all, then the spirit hath begun, and will carry on the work, so that now thou mayst pray confidently for faith, *Cant.* i. 4. *Luke* xi. 13. *Mark* ix. 24.

Obj. III. *But without holiness no man shall see God,* *Heb.* xii. 14. *And how shall I get holiness? I cannot sanctifie my self; and this confidence, you speak of, may slaken my diligence.*

A. If thou hast righteousness in Christ, God will make thee holy; and this confidence is the only way to get holiness, because of that righteousness, *Rom.* v. 21. The new covenant is confirmed in him which promiseth a new heart; if sin be forgiven, thou shalt be delivered from its power, and quickned by the same death and resurrection of Christ, whereby thou art justified, *Col.* ii. 12, 13.

Exhort. III. *It exhorteth them that are justified by faith.*

23 OCT 62
1. To walk humbly, as being nothing of themselves; to acknowledge themselves enemies to God by nature, and acknowledge their sins in the greatness and heinousness of them; that they are saved freely by the righteousness of another, not by their own; yea, are

so far fallen, that the justice of God would have been against them, if it had not been satisfied, *Psal* lxi. 16. *Rom.* iii. 27. but now they see that Christ hath satisfied, and his righteousness is above their sins, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 31.

2. To praise and glorify God thro' Christ for this grace. Oh! what abundant grace and love appears in God's washing and cleansing us by his Son's blood? *Rev.* i. 5. *Gal.* ii. 20. and in making his Son sin and a curse for us, *Rom.* v. 5, 8. *1 John* iv. 9, 10. *Cb.* iii. 16. *2 Cor.* viii. 9. and what a glorious excellent righteousness hath God given us in Christ? *Isa.* lxi. 10.

3. To walk comfortably upon the account of this Righteousness, *Isa.* xl. 1, 2. Triumph over sin and affliction, *Rom.* viii. 33, 39. Be confident in expecting great things from God, *Heb.* x. 22. for tho' you be unworthy, and grace will shew you your own unworthiness, yet you stand upon the righteousness of Christ; glory in the hope of God's glory, for if Christ died to reconcile you when you were enemies, much more will he save you by his life, now you are reconciled, *Rom.* v. 3, 10. Ask boldly for what you want, for God is in Christ's manhood as the mercy-seat; when ever sin stings you, and objections trouble you, look to the brazen serpent, confess sin and trust for pardon, meditate on Christ's righteousness, and the abundance of grace in him, *Rom.* viii. 32. If you find never so much ungodliness, no good qualifications, yet Christ is at hand for your comfort, *Isa.* l. 10. *2 Thes.* ii. 16, 17. In all your sins apply your selves to this Fountain, *Zach.* xiii. 1. *1 John* i. 7. If sin lie on conscience, it weakens peace and spiritual strength; lie not under guilt with a slavish fear, you have a righteousness to deliver you from it; apply it by faith, that you may have no more conscience of sin as condemning, *Heb.* x. 2. *Psal.* xxxii. you have a better righteousness than any perfectionists can have.

4. Hold fast this way of justification, notwithstanding all the noise that is made in the world against it, for the devil will strive to tear you out

384 *The Doctrine of Justification, &c.*

of it, or steal it from you, as he did from the Jews; from the Galatians, the Papists, and many Protestants, Gal. i. 6. And the apostle reckons, it is by a spiritual bewitchery, he will strive to get you to trust on works, and tell you it is for the promoting of holiness, and to trust on works to get Christ, and to lay works lowest in the foundation: if you lose this righteousness of Christ, under any colour or pretence whatever, you lose all; Gal. v. 2, 3. Do not so dishonour Christ, as to think of procuring that by works which you have fully in Christ; think not that the gospel requires another justification to gain this, for the gospel is no legal covenant, but a declaration of the righteousness of faith, and we being justified, are heirs by adoption and promise, Gal. iii. 24, 25, 26. and iv. 7. This is the doctrine which glorifieth God, and abaseth the creature, which is a great mark of its truth: Beware therefore of carnal reason, which will go quite contrary, and make Christ's righteousness a stumbling stone to thee, 1 Pet. ii. 8. Rom. ix. 32, 33.

5. *Walk as one that enjoys the favour of God in Christ.* Let him have the honour of it; walk therefore in holiness, knowing by what price you are redeemed, 1 Pet. i. 17, 18. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15, 2 Pet. i. 5, 11. 1 Cor. vi. last. Love God that hath loved you first, 1 John. iv. 19. Psal. cxvi. 16. Believe that God will enable you for the practice of holiness, Rom. vi. 14. Particularly, walk in love to the saints, exercise forgiveness to your Enemies; sense of your own sins, and God's forgiving you, will cause you to pity and forgive others; else you cannot pray or trust for forgiveness of your own sins upon reasonable grounds, Eph. iv. 31, 32. Mat. vi. 14, 15. Mat. xviii. 21. Desire grace may be exalted upon others, and wait patiently for the full declaration of justification at the great day, Gal. v. 5. Acts iii. 19. for here your justification is known only by faith, but in outward things you are dealt with as a sinner; then your righteousness shall appear openly, and you shall be dealt with according to it.

ews,
ants,
spi-
a to
ting
and
lose
r or
Do
ring
rist;
stifi-
over
aith,
and
the
rea-
ware
tra-
tone

l in
ere-
re-
t. i.
you
that
ness,
the
ence
ause
pray
rafo-
Mat.
hers,
fica-
here
out-
your
l be